ESSENTIAL **LANCASHIRE** RESEARCH GUIDE

BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING FAMILY HISTORY MAGAZINE

ISSUE 215 MARCH 2024

WHO

WW2 EVACUEES MOVING STORIES

DO YOU THINK WE ARE?®

HOW TO GROW YOUR FAMILY TREE FOR LESS

Make your money go further with our thrifty research tips

INHERITANCE IN SCOTLAND
Find records online and in the archives

My relative was on Franklin's doomed arctic expedition

FOR EVERMORE
Commemorate your family's fallen heroes on this new website

APPRENTICE REGISTERS Discover how your 18th-century family learnt a trade

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- Merchant Navy records online
- Yorkshire electoral records released
- An Edwardian robberies register

This was Sylvia's promise to you...

A generation ago, a woman named Sylvia made a promise. As a doctor's secretary, she'd watched stroke destroy the lives of so many people. She was determined to make sure we could all live in a world where we're far less likely to lose our lives to stroke.

She kept her promise, and a gift to the Stroke Association was included in her Will. Sylvia's gift helped fund the work that made sure many more of us survive stroke now than did in her lifetime.

Sylvia changed the story for us all. Now it's our turn to change the story for those who'll come after us.

Stroke still shatters lives and tears families apart. And for so many survivors the road to recovery is still long and desperately lonely. If you or someone you love has been affected by stroke – you'll know just what that means.

But it doesn't have to be like this. You can change the story, just like Sylvia did, with a gift in your Will. All it takes is a promise.

You can promise future generations a world where researchers discover new treatments and surgeries and every single stroke survivor has the best care, rehabilitation and support network possible, to help them rebuild their lives.

Big or small, every legacy gift left to the Stroke Association will make a difference to stroke survivors and their families.

Find out how by calling 020 7566 1505

or email legacy@stroke.org.uk

or visit stroke.org.uk/legacy

Rebuilding lives after stroke

The Stroke Association is registered as a charity in England and Wales (No 211015) and in Scotland (SC037789).
Also registered in the Isle of Man (No. 945) and Jersey (NPO 369), and operating as a charity in Northern Ireland.

Stroke Association

Welcome

Sarah's Top Tip

Check out indexes and transcriptions on the websites of local archives

GEM FROM THE ARCHIVE

Robberies Register, 1909–1916

As I mention in my article on saving money, it's easy to find yourself blinkered by your main genealogy website and miss out on free records elsewhere. I was delighted therefore to read this month's 'Gem from the Archive' (**page 66**) which features just the kind of fascinating resource I love. If you have ancestors from Warrington then check the website out. There's more to archive websites than the opening times!

From rising heating bills to soaring food prices, the cost-of-living crisis doesn't mean that we can't continue to do the thing we love most: delving into the past. On **page 14** I have shared tips on how you can access all of the great records available online, for less. Please do write in if you have any other money-saving tips you would like to pass on to readers.

I was deeply moved this month looking at two different regimental photographs, both taken in 1916. One was sent in by Maggie Cobbett as one of our letters (**page 7**). It shows rows of young men all neatly dressed, with stiff caps and straight backs on a training camp in Henham Park, Suffolk. The other can be seen on **page 50**, sent in by Ian Chard. Also taken in 1916, but after a fierce battle that was part of the Somme offensive, it shows just 77 men who were able to parade from a company of 200. These were the lucky ones, but their posture and dress says it all. What a contrast. I'm hoping readers can put a name to some of the faces.

Even if you have no connection to these regiments, you can share details of anyone from your family who died serving in the world wars on a new online platform (see **page 19** and **page 52**). We've also got advice on Scottish inheritance (**page 29**), Merchant Navy ancestors (**page 35**), 18th-century apprentices (**page 38**) and Lancashire research (**page 61**). Something for everyone. Happy hunting!

Sarah

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Contributors

Lewis Brown
As a child Lewis was taken on a trip to Ypres, and he's met Harry Patch. Now he works for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and tells us about its new project on **page 19**.

Paul Blake
A fellow of the Society of Genealogists, Paul gives talks and writes on a number of family history topics. On **page 38** he shares his expertise on apprenticeship registers from the 1700s.

Gillian Mawson
Gillian has interviewed over 500 wartime evacuees and used this material in four books. On **page 54** she talks about the different experiences children had away from home.

COVER IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES/A WOMAN DROPS MONEY INTO A PIGGY BANK, c1950s

CONTENTS
MARCH 2024

FEATURES

14 Money-Saving Tips ON THE COVER
Sarah Williams shares her expert advice for making the most of your money when using online records

19 For Evermore ON THE COVER
Lewis Brown explains how you can commemorate your fallen relation online with this new website from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

54 WW2 Evacuees ON THE COVER
Gillian Mawson tells the moving stories of the children who were evacuated during the Second World War

RESEARCH ADVICE

29 Focus On ON THE COVER
Chris Paton outlines how inheritance in Scotland has changed over the years, and how you can find records online and in the archives

35 Best Websites ON THE COVER
Jonathan Scott rounds up the online resources for Merchant Navy relations that you can't afford to miss

38 Record Masterclass ON THE COVER
Learn how to track down and use apprenticeship records with Paul Blake's research guide

52 Tech Tips ON THE COVER
Nick Peers presents a detailed step-by-step tutorial for uploading material to For Evermore

YOUR RESEARCH

24 Reader Story ON THE COVER
"My relative was on Franklin's doomed expedition to the arctic," says author Angus Wardlaw

58 Eureka Moment
Jeremy Baker reveals how he uncovered the identity of his great great grandmother

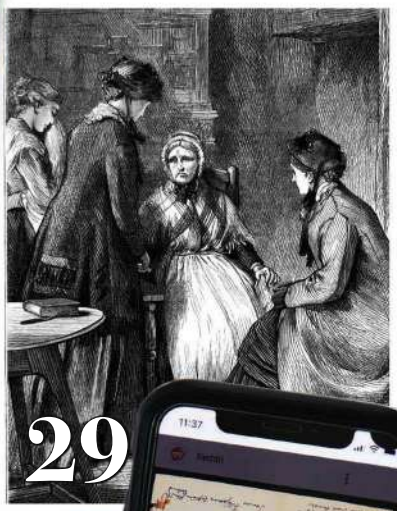
74 Family Hero
Bruce Barnes pays tribute to his father, who risked his life in the Merchant Navy and found love in Canada

REGULARS

6 Letters
Your ideas, comments and advice

9 What's On
Online and in-person talks, shows and exhibitions

10 News ON THE COVER
All of the latest developments, including RootsTech's schedule and a major release of Yorkshire records



GETTY IMAGES / WARRINGTON ARCHIVES AND LOCAL STUDIES / UNP/TERI PENGILLEY

SUBSCRIPTION OFFER 22

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13 Off The Record
Probate records from the 1600s emphasise our ancestors' wish to get the resting place they deserved

43 Q&A
This month's queries include researching First World War soldiers' service, solving a paternity mystery with DNA testing, and tracking down an elusive great aunt

49 *Wdytya? Magazine* Shop
Back issues, magazine storage and certificate binders

50 Can You Help?
Bristol-based historian Ian Chard shares an evocative photograph from the Western Front – and asks if you recognise any of the depicted men from your own tree

60 Your Projects
Meet one of the volunteers transcribing the visitors' books from The Lord Leycester in Warwick

61 Around Britain ON THE COVER
Everything you need to know about the resources available to research your Lancashire roots

66 Gem From The Archive ON THE COVER
A Warrington 'Robberies Register', 1909–1916

GUIDE

68 Books & Digital Picks
This month's family history inspiration

70 TV & Radio
Celebrate 200 years of the RNLI with Griff Rhys Jones

Letters

Email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

Write to *WDYTYA? Magazine*, Eagle House, Bristol BS1 4ST

WIN an AncestryDNA test kit from **ancestry.co.uk** **WORTH £79**

The writer of our star letter wins an AncestryDNA test **worth £79** – so drop us a line and share your thoughts with us.

Family Historians Must Be Heard

STAR LETTER

Soldiers' headstones in the Cannock Chase German Military Cemetery in Staffordshire

The plan to digitise wills and probate documents then destroy the originals, as mentioned in the 'News' section of the February issue, has rightly provoked outrage. However, it is surely part of a bigger debate about which records we preserve.

I recently did two pieces of research around exhumation; I knew that the Home Office closely regulates exhumations, and I expected to find detailed records. The first piece of research was on German servicemen, mainly airmen and sailors, who either died in Britain or whose remains were washed up on our shores. During the war these men were buried in local churchyards across the country. However, in 1959 a German war cemetery was established in Cannock Chase, Staffordshire, under a treaty between the then federal government of Germany and the UK government, and nearly all of the remains were exhumed and reburied there. I was expecting to find a large file relating to the exhumations, but there isn't one.

My other piece of research was on Count Michael Károlyi, who led the First Hungarian Republic from 1918 to 1919. He was active in Hungarian politics all his life, mainly in exile, and died in 1955. He was buried with his son Ádám, who had died in a plane crash on the Isle of Wight shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War, in St Andrew's Church, Chale, Isle of Wight. In 1962 both father and son were exhumed and their remains taken to Hungary. In this case, The National Archives at Kew holds a comprehensive file at HO 282/44. Looking at files in this series it becomes obvious that only those of the famous and notorious have been kept. There are, for instance, files on Lady Cynthia Mosley, Derek Bentley, James Hanratty, Timothy Evans and William Joyce, but none relating to 'ordinary' folk.

Obviously not every record ever created can be preserved – think of the number that His Majesty's Revenue and Customs and the Department for Work and Pensions must create – but somehow family historians need to find a permanent place at the table when these decisions are made.

Tony Bevis, by email

Editor Replies **This is a very important point you bring up, Tony. It's vital that family historians are considered when these decisions are made.**

Workhouse Hero

Thank you so much for Peter Higginbotham's feature on workhouse records in the February issue, which may help to provide some hitherto elusive details about a young man way back in my family tree.

All I know for certain about David Robert Davidson is that he was sent up from a London workhouse at a very tender age to the coal-mining village of Hartshead in the West Riding of Yorkshire, where he started work in the pit. Some years later, he married one of my great aunts, who had just been widowed and left with three little girls to bring up. He must have been a great stepfather to those girls because they never forgot his kindness in marrying their widowed mother, who was 10 years older than him.

Very shortly afterwards, like so many others, he perished in the First World War. I've been to St Peter's in Hartshead to see his name included on the memorial to the fallen and hear it read out on Remembrance Day.

My great aunt and her daughters emigrated to the USA in 1919, taking David's regimental photo *(opposite)* and memorial scroll with them. Years later, the widower of one of the daughters sent them both back to the UK, feeling that David's family should have them. He has no actual descendants, of course, and I'd love to find out if any of his blood relatives are still alive.

It's a cliché, but no less true, that I wish I'd paid more attention when older relatives were talking about past events. All I have are snippets, but I think there was mention of David having left behind some siblings in the workhouse and never knowing what happened to them after he was sent north. They may well have married, and had children and grandchildren of their own.

GETTY IMAGES

Maggie's book based on her research, and the regimental photo she inherited. Inset, David is holding the machine gun

I'd have preferred to write a biography but, with very few solid facts to go on, I've had to settle so far for a short work of fiction aimed at children and dedicated to David's memory. At least Ripon Workhouse Museum (**ripon museums.co.uk**) is benefiting from selling copies in its shop.
Maggie Cobbett, Ripon

EDITOR REPLIES **If anyone has an ancestor who fought with 'D' Company, 2/5th Battalion, Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment and would like a digital copy of Maggie's regimental photograph *(above)*, please email the magazine.**

Wonky Scans

Several of the last few death certificates that I have requested from the new General Register Office (GRO) 'digital image' service have been incorrectly aligned so that the lower parts of the image strip are cut off. On complaining, I received standard letters saying that this cannot be remedied as they are unable to "manipulate the image", and that I am advised to order a £7.50 PDF image instead. They apologise and refund the £2.50 fee. I have attached an example *(below)*, where it is impossible to see where the person died.

What is happening here? Either the contract to supply these images has been very poorly drafted without a proper system of quality control, or alternatively one can't help wondering if someone is determined to sink the system. It's a shame, because the low cost does certainly encourage family historians to check their facts carefully.
Prof Carolyn Roberts, by email

EDITOR REPLIES **I have seen a few people having problems with the GRO scans. I hope that this won't be an ongoing problem with their plans to scan more records. If I manage to get a response from them regarding this, I will share it with readers.**

Workhouse Links

Peter Higginbotham's article on workhouses in the February issue triggered several thoughts and memories for me, particularly as you showed several pictures from the Bedfordshire workhouses. Bedfordshire is my home county and my great grandfather died in the Bedford Workhouse in March 1910, of gangrene, and indeed had spent previous occasions in the same workhouse, along with his wife. Two of their four children were also born in the workhouse (but not my grandfather). From the information I have gathered, their family life must have been one long struggle, not helped by a fondness for drink!

I am also secretary of the Mary Hollon Annuity Relief in Need Trust, established in Morpeth, Northumberland, in 1881. The charity was set up to meet the needs of the poor in Morpeth, but not just any poor person. They had to be at least 60 years old, of good moral and sober character, and not to have been in the workhouse or received parish relief! I would have assumed that those in receipt of parish relief or who had been admitted to the local workhouse were in the greatest need. The concept of the 'deserving poor' was never better demonstrated. A dozen men and 13 women were selected by the local councillors, if necessary by voting. The local paper was often critical of the councillors, saying that they were failing the real poor, which was probably true.

Being an annuitant, as they were known, was certainly beneficial. As well as a "liberal meat tea" served in a hostelry on 5 November each year, each annuitant received £10 a quarter and a ton of coal at Christmas.

And we still exist today, helping Morpeth residents who struggle financially as well as victims of domestic abuse, and local charities. We still hold the Hollon Tea on 5 November, but we don't assess moral character, or financial hardship! It has become an afternoon out for 65 or so older people (over 75). Our oldest attendee is 101.

Mary Hollon was the niece of Dr William Trotter, who was chair of the board of guardians that looked after the Morpeth Workhouse in the 1840s and 1850s. He, Mary and other guardians used to take Christmas presents along to the inmates, including cigars.

Nearly all my knowledge comes from newspaper reports and Bridget Gubbins' book *The Mysteries of Morpeth's Workhouse* (Greater Morpeth Development Trust, 2013) where she says, "Not only has the building gone, with its sorrowful memories, but nearly all the documentation has been destroyed too. Was there a sense of shame, a feeling that this part of Morpeth's history was best forgotten?" And is that replicated across the country?
Andrew Tebbutt, Morpeth

EDITOR REPLIES **Unfortunately many workhouses, such as Morpeth,** ▶

Marcia L Moran commented on our website's article about Gypsy research tinyurl.com/wdytya-gyp-descent
My maternal nana's family on her mum's side was a Travelling family. Out of the four branches, this one is proving the most difficult. This site is exactly what I'm looking for!

	Cotterstock							Cotterstock	1844		
307	Tenth of August 1844 at	Mary	Bellamy	female	79 years	Widow of Henry Bellamy Labourer	Decay of Nature	The mark of + Elizabeth Blades present at the death	Twelfth of August 1844	James	Siddons Registrar

Carolyn was disappointed to receive this digital image of a death record from the GRO with some of the key information omitted

did not keep their records. It's so sad to think that shame may have played a part in that. But I love the sound of your Hollon Tea!

Unwanted Certificates

Like most family historians, I now and again need to order a birth, marriage or death certificate and there will be times when it is the wrong one. What do other people do with their unwanted certificates? Do they just throw them away, or try to track down the correct owner?
David Hammon, Hull

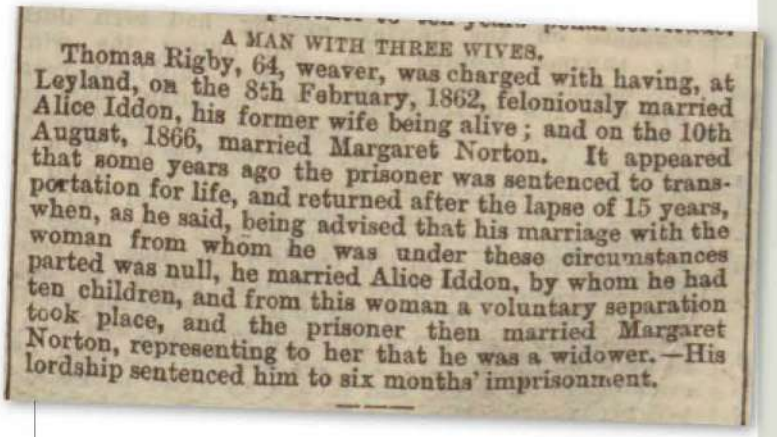
Editor Replies In the days of the *WDYTYA? Magazine* forum we had a channel for people to offer up their unwanted certificates. Lots of people uploaded details of certificates, but I don't think I remember a single person claiming one. I suspect as the information is becoming cheaper and easier to access, the demand for 'second-hand' certificates will be even less. Have any readers successfully passed on certificates?

Bigamist In My Tree

On the 'Welcome' page of the February issue you asked readers to share their family stories of bigamy to tie in with Rebecca Probert's article on the subject.

My widowed ancestor, Margaret Norton (née Young), married her second husband, John Mort, in 1870. Revisiting this branch of my family, I noticed a new 'hint' attached to Margaret's name on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**). It was for a marriage in Manchester Cathedral in August 1866, and the original record was available online. It was definitely 'our' Margaret Norton. Not only are her age, father's name and occupation correct but her niece was a witness. There did not appear to be a death for Thomas Bell, the groom, between 1866 and 1870 when she married John Mort. What's more, if Margaret was now Margaret Bell, why did she marry John using the surname of her first husband?

The local newspapers revealed all. "A Man with Three Wives" was a headline in the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* on 15 December 1866. In 1825 Thomas Rigby was transported for life, but released in 1840. He was married at the time of his conviction, and his wife was still alive on his return. Nevertheless, he married for a second time at Leyland near Preston. He had 10 children with this second 'wife', Alice Iddon. Thomas deserted Alice and the children, met up with Margaret in Manchester and married her. The certificate indicates that he was a "widower". None of the newspaper articles mention that Thomas married Margaret using a different surname. It was two months into the marriage that Margaret found out that he was already married, and her friends gave information to the police which resulted in the prosecution. He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour.
Sue Bond, Exeter



A MAN WITH THREE WIVES.

Thomas Rigby, 64, weaver, was charged with having, at Leyland, on the 8th February, 1862, feloniously married Alice Iddon, his former wife being alive; and on the 10th August, 1866, married Margaret Norton. It appeared that some years ago the prisoner was sentenced to transportation for life, and returned after the lapse of 15 years, when, as he said, being advised that his marriage with the woman from whom he was under these circumstances parted was null, he married Alice Iddon, by whom he had ten children, and from this woman a voluntary separation took place, and the prisoner then married Margaret Norton, representing to her that he was a widower.—His lordship sentenced him to six months' imprisonment.

This article, in the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, gives an account of the trial of the bigamist who married Margaret's forebear

Editor Replies Wow Sue, I wonder if that counts as 'trigamy'?

Sweet Memories

In the Christmas issue, Alex Fisher's 'Focus On' article about Parliamentary records, particularly the Protestation Return of 1641, caught my eye. The names William and Richard Honicomb made me recall instantly Gordon Honeycombe!

I wonder how many of your readers remember his very first *Family History* programme from 1979? The newsreader had started his family history search, but became stuck when he couldn't place an ancestor anywhere in Devon – the county of his ancestors for many years. We were all dependant on visits to the local record office in our county of interest back then, once we got beyond the material at St Catherine's House and the Public Record Office near the Law Courts. Easy long-distance digital research wasn't possible then.

It was Mr Honeycombe's TV series that spurred me on to start with my husband's family history.

He also co-authored an excellent family history book with Don Steele, and another title, which was based on a family connection with India.
Mrs Jenny Wears, by email

Editor Replies Thanks Jenny. You might like to know that two of the episodes have been uploaded to YouTube – see tinyurl.com/yt-honeycombe.

YOUR LETTER IN PRINT We reserve the right to edit any letters sent to the magazine. Messages posted to our Facebook wall and tweets sent to us may also appear in print. The choice of Star Letter is the editor's and the prize is subject to change.

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What's On

Email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk* to feature your event here for free

PICK OF THE MONTH

Don't miss this event in Malvern

The Family History Show

16 March

a Three Counties Showground, Malvern

w **thefamilyhistoryshow.com/midlands/**

Family History Show events are always very popular

The Family History Show takes place in the Midlands for the first time this month, in addition to its traditional locations of York (22 June), London (5 October) and online (10 February). As usual, there's a programme of varied talks – 'Behind the Scenes of *WDYTYA?*' by Nick Barratt, 'Breaking Down Brick Walls' by Mark Bayley, 'Genealogy Hints and Tips' by Keith Gregson and 'Using DNA to Support Family History Research' by Amelia Bennett. Plus, there's the chance to book a one-to-one session with an expert on topics including military research, DNA, brick walls, house history and social history, and an exhibition hall with stalls from companies and societies. £8 in advance (two for £12), £12 on the day.

IN PERSON

Spitalfields Through The Ages

2 March

a Dartford Science and Technology College

t 01322 527604

w **tinyurl.com/nwkfhs-spit**

John Halligan will talk about the development of Spitalfields and the migrant groups who settled there, including Huguenots. Free to North West Kent Family History Society members; non-members are asked for a small donation.

The Bomber And The Weathervane

14 March

a International Bomber Command Centre, Lincoln

t 01522 514755

w **tinyurl.com/ibcc-vane**

Former police detective Tony Aston reveals how two friends bought a weathervane fashioned into a Lancaster bomber, and the link to a plane downed in 1944. £15, including a buffet supper.

Untold Lives: A Palace At Work

14 March to 27 October

a Kensington Palace, London

t 0333 320 6000

w **tinyurl.com/hrp-untold**

This exhibition explores the lives of the servants who have kept the royal palaces running over the past 300 years. Free with the cost of palace entry (£20 for non-members, free for members).

Newspaper Archives

18 March

a Uckfield Meeting Centre

w **sfhg.uk/events/group-diary/uckfield/newspaper-archives**

Celia Heritage will share tips for using newspapers in this Sussex Family History Group event. Free.

IN PERSON & ONLINE

The Mourning Brooch

23 March

a Woolmer Green Village Hall

e *chairhertsfhs@gmail.com*

w **hertsfhs.org.uk/hfphs43.html**

Jean Renwick reveals the years of research behind her fact-based family saga *The Mourning Brooch* in this Hertfordshire Family History Society event. If you have a piece of mourning jewellery, please bring it along. Free.

ONLINE

Women's Work: Lives In Stitches

28 February

w **one-name.org/livesinstitches/**

This talk from the Guild of One-Name Studies looks at an overlooked source for genealogy – samplers and other embroidery worked by girls and young women. Free, booking required.

Creating Family Trees And Pedigree Charts

6 March to 3 April

w **tinyurl.com/sog-pedi**

Once you've done your family history research, how do you present your findings? This five-week course from the Society of Genealogists aims to demonstrate various methods of creating a family tree or pedigree, both by hand and by computer. £50, or £40 for members of the society.

Coal Mining Ancestors Course

11 and 18 March

w **tinyurl.com/berkfhs-coal**

Discover how to research your miner forebears with this two-part course from historian Richard Marks. £20, or £18 for Berkshire Family History Society members.

Researching West Country Criminals

15 March

w **tinyurl.com/eventbrite-swht-criminals**

Archivist Esther Hoyle explains the key records for criminal ancestors in this talk from the South West Heritage Trust. £5.

Genetic Genealogy For Beginners

19 March

w **tinyurl.com/dorset-fhs-dna**

In this Dorset Family History Society event Martin McDowell explains DNA testing. £3.

A Lost Medieval Island: Ravenseer Odd And Its Afterlives

22 March

w **tinyurl.com/eventbrite-tna-raven**

Kathryn Maude, the head of medieval collections at The National Archives at Kew, and Emily Robinson, reader in British studies at the University of Sussex, tell the story of an island that emerged near the mouth of the Humber c1231. Pay what you can, £5 recommended.

BOOK AHEAD

The Family History Federation announces a new event

East Anglia FHF Really Useful Family History Show

20 April

a Burgess Hall, St Ives, Cambridgeshire

t 01263 824951

w **fhf-reallyuseful.com/2024-live**

The Family History Federation is bringing back in-person events in 2024 for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic began, as it celebrates its 50th anniversary. The show includes talks, and stalls from societies. Free, talk sessions £2, programmes £1.

News

Rosemary Collins reports on data releases and genealogy news

RootsTech schedule announced

RootsTech, the world's largest family history show, takes place online and in person from Thursday 29 February to Saturday 2 March.

RootsTech took place annually in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, between 2011 and 2020. The following two years it was replaced by an online event. In 2023 the show was an online and in-person hybrid, and the same applies this year.

Tickets to the in-person event in Salt Lake City start at $69 for a one-day pass, but online attendees can watch a large number of talks for free. Registration is online at **familysearch.org/en/rootstech**.

Jen Allen, RootsTech event director, said, "After the success of RootsTech 2023, we're looking forward to another incredible experience in 2024 offering the thrill of discovery, meeting cousins, making new connections with others, amazing entertainment, and learning about exciting new products. We also have an amazing lineup of keynote speakers, plus sessions delivered by some of the most respected names in the genealogy and family history community. We're confident that RootsTech 2024 will be an unforgettable experience for all who attend."

Lynne M Jackson will be one of the keynote speakers at this year's RootsTech

This year's keynote addresses will be given by Steve Rockwood, president and chief executive officer of FamilySearch International, which runs RootsTech; Lynne M Jackson, great great granddaughter of Dred and Harriet Scott, who brought a legal case suing for their freedom from slavery to the US Supreme Court in 1857; Asian-American stand-up comedian Henry Cho; singer–songwriter Katie James; and photographer Nancy Borowick.

There are also more than 200 online family history classes in over 26 languages. Online classes in English cover a wide variety of topics, including 'Metropolitan Ancestors: Finding Families in Georgian and Victorian London', 'A Guide to Australian Genealogical Research' and 'Finding Your Common Name Ancestor'.

Other online RootsTech features include a session scheduler and a live chat with other participants.

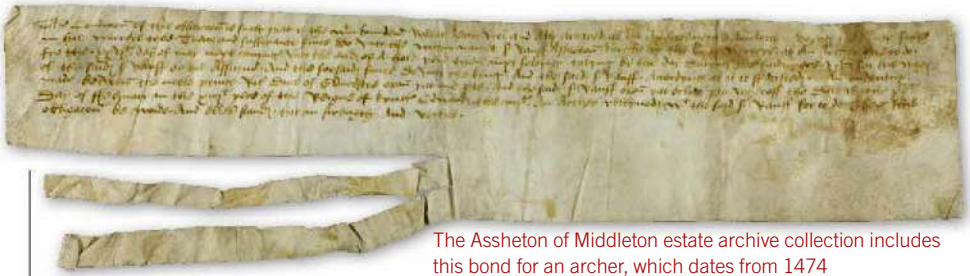
Greater Manchester's oldest archive collection saved

The Assheton of Middleton estate archive, Greater Manchester's oldest surviving archive collection, has been saved by Manchester City Council.

It was purchased by the council and will be held at the Greater Manchester County Record Office in Manchester Central Library (**manchester.gov.uk/info/448/archives_and_local_history**).

The collection of 1,400 items is from the papers of the Assheton family of Middleton, and dates from the Middle Ages to the English Civil War.

The papers include the archive's earliest surviving written document, the 1197 Articles of Agreement, dividing lands within the Assheton estate between Roger de Middleton and William de Radcliffe.



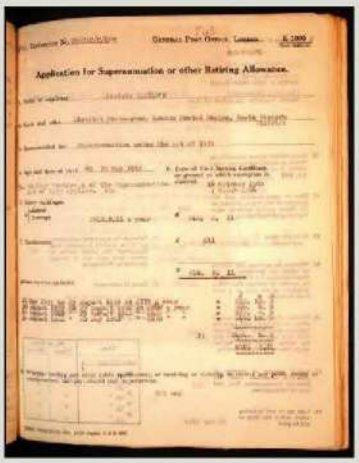
The Assheton of Middleton estate archive collection includes this bond for an archer, which dates from 1474

The articles of agreement were witnessed by "Adam, parson of Middleton", and the record is the earliest evidence of a church there.

The purchase was made possible with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the V&A Purchase Fund, the Friends of the National Libraries and the Manchester Central Library Development Trust.

ROOTSTECH / MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

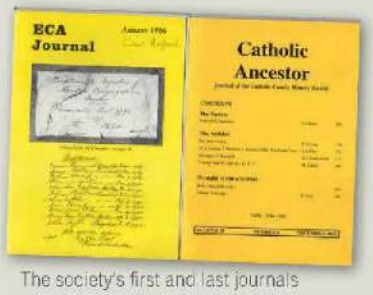
NEWS IN BRIEF



One of the pension records in the collection

Ancestry releases Post Office pension records

Family history website Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) has added 278,540 Royal Mail pension and gratuity records from 1860–1970, thanks to its partnership with The Postal Museum. The records are searchable and include digitised images. The collection records the pensions paid to former Royal Mail employees, including their rank, salary, where they worked and how long they worked for.



The society's first and last journals

Catholic Family History Society closes down

The Catholic Family History Society has announced its closure after 40 years. The society was founded in 1983 under the name English Catholic Ancestor. Members carried out transcription projects, held meetings and published a journal. Chair and general secretary Sylvia Dibbs blamed a lack of volunteers to run the society. Its materials will be transferred to the Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society (**mlfhs.uk/catholic**).

Family Wise's office in Calne

Work-experience opportunity offered to young genealogists

Probate research and genealogy company Family Wise (family-wise.co.uk) is offering one young genealogist a three-day tour of its headquarters.

The tour will take place in April at Family Wise's facility in Calne, Wiltshire. Travel and accommodation expenses will be paid.

Family Wise offers services including tracing the beneficiaries of wills, finding people, family history research, and understanding the results of a DNA test.

Maddy Bullock, digital marketing assistant at Family Wise, said, "During these three days, they will get an hour with the managing director; a chance to assist the case managers with difficult research; an insight into our search techniques; time on our international desk; and the chance to work with our marketing team. This is an incredible opportunity for someone to learn how to make money in genealogy, learn more about the industry, and give them invaluable experience to put on their CV."

She added, "The qualities we are looking for in a candidate are dedication, tenacity, willingness to learn, problem-solving, and strong genealogical skills and interests."

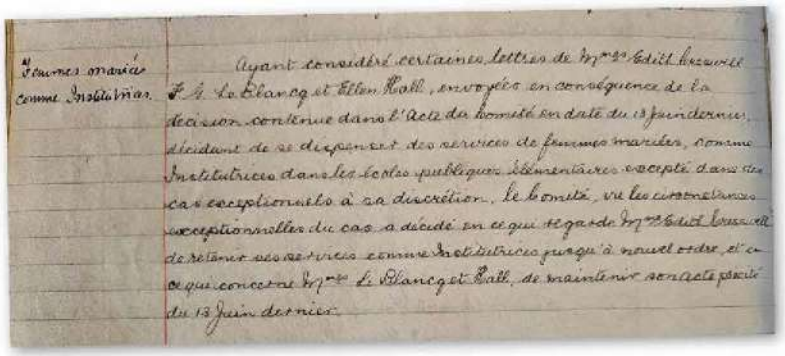
Applicants must be aged 18–30. If you're interested in applying, please send an email to *maddy@family-wise.co.uk* by Friday 15 March to learn the next steps.

CAN YOU HELP?

A former resident of Inverkip, Inverclyde, has launched a website showcasing his research into the local war memorial (**theiwm.co.uk**). Hilary Fyfe's site includes biographies of the 29 men listed on the memorial, of whom 24 died in the First World War – Alfred Price, Daniel Shaw, Duncan Scott, Edward Denny, Ernest Tibble, George McIntosh, George Murdoch, George Wales, James Malcolm, John Hyslop, John Milne, Joseph Harrison, Michael Anderson, Peter Culligan, Robert Murdoch, Thomas McFarlane, William Crawford, James Campbell, John Muir, Joseph Griffiths, James Kirk, Harry Harrower, Humphrey McFarlane and Daniel Boyle. The other five died in the Second World War: Gabriel Ritchie, John Blaikie, Roderick Devlin, Archibald Stewart and Thomas Evans. If you have any information about any of these men, please share it on the website's forum.

Biographies of the names on the memorial are now online

CATHOLIC FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY / FAMILY WISE / HILARY FYFE



Femmes mariées comme Institutrices.

Ayant considéré certaines lettres de Mmes Edith Creswell F. G. Le Blancq et Ellen Hall, envoyées en conséquence de la décision contenue dans l'Acte du comité en date du 13 juin dernier décidant de se dispenser des services de femmes mariées, comme Institutrices dans les écoles publiques élémentaires excepté dans des cas exceptionnels à sa discrétion. Le comité, vu les circonstances exceptionnelles du cas a décidé en ce qui regarde Mme Edith Creswell de retenir ses services comme Institutrice jusqu'à nouvel ordre et en ce qui concerne Mmes Le Blancq et Hall, de maintenir son acte passé du 13 juin dernier.

The minutes of the meeting confirming that only Mrs Creswell would be kept on

'Marriage bar' in 1920s Jersey revealed

Newly opened records from Jersey have revealed the existence of a ban on married women working on the island in the 1920s.

Under Freedom of Information legislation, various records from Jersey in 1923, held at Jersey Archive (**jerseyheritage.org/visit/places-to-visit/jersey-archive**), became publicly available at the start of 2024.

They include the minutes of Jersey's Primary Instruction Committee, which reveal that on 13 June 1923 the committee decided to dispense with the services of any married women who were employed in primary schools apart from exceptional cases, which were at the discretion of the committee.

On 11 July, the records show that the committee received letters from Edith Creswell, FG Le Blancq and Ellen Hall. They were all married female teachers who were due to lose their jobs as a result of the committee's decision.

The committee decided that Mrs Creswell could keep her job, but Mrs Le Blancq and Mrs Hall were not so lucky.

Volunteer uncovers Robert Burns reference in archives

A volunteer for Dumfries and Galloway Council's Heritage Service (**dumgal.gov.uk/article/24609/Heritage-Service**) has uncovered a fascinating incident in the life of Scotland's national poet in the council's archives. While indexing records, Jennifer Roberts found a mention of John Lewars, an excise man in Dumfries in 1792, who had threatened two women while drunk. His colleague Robert Burns prevented him from doing any harm – and what's more, Lewars was his superior.

"This is a fantastic example of the richness of our Heritage Service's archive collection," commented councillor Ian Blake, who chairs the council's Communities Committee.

Jennifer Evans, the volunteer who found the record that mentions Robert Burns

166,168,357
The number of theories now available on the Theory of Family Relativity DNA matches feature on MyHeritage (**myheritage.com/dna**)

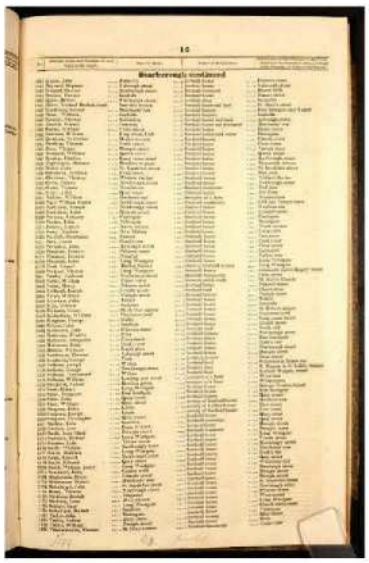
100 Ballads
A new website featuring 17th-century ballads has launched (**100ballads.org**)

Colossus
New photographs of the Second World War Bletchley Park computer have been released (**tinyurl.com/bbc-coll**)

Christ's College
Medieval wall paintings have been uncovered at the University of Cambridge college (**tinyurl.com/shropshire-star-wall**)

29,003
The number of Sheffield workhouse records (1700–1915) added to **findmypast.co.uk**

£2.1m
The amount of funding that has been given to the Royal Cornwall Museum in Truro (**tinyurl.com/bbc-rcm**)



Geologist William Smith is recorded in this newly digitised 1839 electoral register

Ancestry adds electoral registers from Yorkshire

Family history website Ancestry (ancestry.co.uk) has added a new collection of 15,054,046 electoral registers created in North Yorkshire.

The collection starts in 1832, when electoral registers were first printed after the passing of the 1832 Reform Act. This gave more people the right to vote, but only certain men. The records continue up to 1971.

The collection includes both searchable indexes and digitised images of the original registers, which are preserved by North Yorkshire County Record Office.

Electoral registers are a good substitute for census records, because they record names and addresses. This means they are an excellent way of seeing where your ancestors lived in years when a census wasn't taken.

The registers include many famous people who lived in the area. For example, the 1839 electoral register records William Smith living at Newborough Street, Scarborough. Known as the 'father of English geology', Smith produced a geological map of Great Britain, the first national geological map of any country, in 1815.

JERSEY HERITAGE / DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL

The Will For A Christian Burial

Alan Crosby explains how probate records from the 1600s emphasise our ancestors' wish to get the resting place they deserved

Recently I was working with a group of family and local historians, looking at probate records from the early 17th century relating to two townships near St Helens. We noted how there were standard phrases that appeared in most of the wills – formulaic wording which is found throughout the country, and relates particularly to the religious beliefs and wishes of the testator. Almost everybody who made a will expressed the fervent hope, or expectation, that they would go to heaven and be redeemed by the suffering and passion of Jesus Christ, a sentiment often set down in the beautiful and majestic words of the 1549 Book of Common Prayer and the King James Bible of 1611.

This emphasises the appropriate religious sentiments that, in principle, everyone should have held in a godly and God-fearing nation. The hope that the soul would be with God, to be resurrected at the Day of Judgment, was shared by just about everybody. Most testators then referred to the fate of their body – the earthly remains implied in the familiar phrase, "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust". That quotation, from the Book of Common Prayer, means that the body will decay and so return to the earth from whence it came. The crucial point, as so many wills state, is that it should be done with a "Christian burial". That was important, and was highlighted by the fact that many people were specific about their burial place – 'their' parish church or churchyard, and quite frequently they give an exact location: "before the altar", "in the burying place of my ancestors".

Many people were specific about their burial place in their will

The key to this is that most of the churchyard and all of the church itself were consecrated ground, which was sanctified and holy. That's why there is so often the emphasis on "Christian" burial. Everybody knew that unbaptised babies (who did not yet have God's protection) and suicides (who had forfeited it) might well be buried on the north side of the church, in the shadow of the building – a place that was colder, damper and more gloomy, and indeed of doubtful sanctity. That was a terrible fear, a fate to be avoided, so executors were reminded of their duty to arrange proper Christian burial, with the burial service that was set out in the Prayer Book, and with all the solemnity suiting the occasion.

From the later 16th century onwards it became increasingly common to add to the formality of burial by erecting some form of marker such as a gravestone, a grave board (made of wood), a tomb or a monument. This was an opportunity for at least some people in the community to draw attention to the social status of their family. An ostentatious sculpture, a great stone box, or fancy calligraphic lettering showed the good taste (or conspicuous wealth) of those left behind.

By the 19th century there might be expensive decorative stone, or an ornamented kerbstone surrounding a rectangular plot, with urns and vases for flowers. As we all know, memorial inscriptions can be invaluable for family historians.

Of course, most of this relates to people and families who had sufficient resources to pay for a 'proper' funeral, and to have a stonemason carve the gravestone. The majority of people were not in that position, even though society's rules and norms expected it. This led to the fearful prospect of a pauper's funeral in an unmarked grave. For us, their descendants researching family history, we can't visit their grave, trim the grass around a slab, carefully scrape off the moss, and terrace the inscription with a gentle touch of our finger. We do not know where they lie, and we never will, but maybe today that corner of the churchyard has wild flowers, ancient trees, and a sunny wall of old lichened stone. Perhaps not so bad after all?

ALAN CROSBY lives in Lancashire and is the editor of *The Local Historian*

ILLUSTRATION WWW.SUEGENT.COM

HOW TO GROW YOUR FAMILY TREE FOR LESS

Sarah Williams looks at some of the ways that family historians can make their pennies stretch further

Like all good hobbies, researching your family history can come with a few costs. Although there's plenty you can do for free, once you get stuck into your research, you will find there are things you need to pay for, from birth, marriage and death records to genealogy subscription websites. Although we cover plenty of free websites in this magazine, many of the records that family historians want to access are tucked behind a paywall.

Since accessing these pay-to-view records is probably the main cost for most people researching their family tree, this article looks at how you can do that for less, whether it's extending your subscriptions by building in some tactical pauses or tracking down the very best offers available.

We've also included some tips on how to get the most out of some of the amazing free resources out there. It may feel hard to let go of your subscription to your favourite family history website, even for a short while, but there are some fantastic free options out there that you may be missing out on by just focusing on the records you need to pay for.

So, read on and get some thrifty inspiration!

You should add your tree to as many websites as you can

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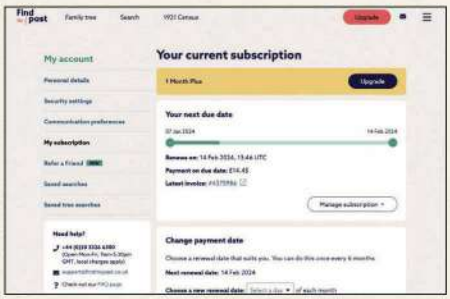
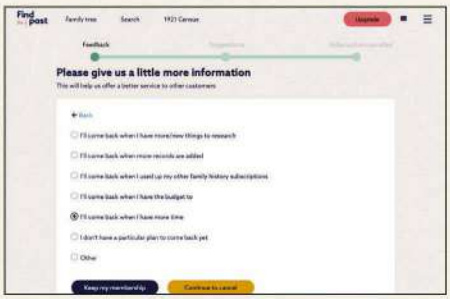
How To Pause Your Findmypast Subscription

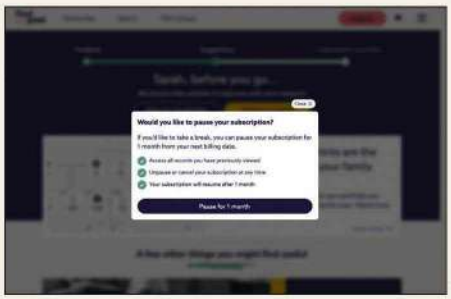
Going away for a bit? Having a break from research? Find out how to pause your subscription to **findmypast.co.uk**



1 To pause a monthly Findmypast subscription, click 'My Account' in the menu bar and select 'My subscription'. Next, click 'Manage subscription' and a dropdown will give you the option to 'Change subscription' or 'Cancel'. Select 'Cancel'.



2 You will be asked to choose the reason why you wish to cancel from a list of suggested options. We chose 'I'll come back when I have more time' and then 'I'm taking a break, but I'll come back'. Each time select 'Continue to cancel'.



3 The option to 'Pause for 1 month' starts from your next billing date, so may be as much as a month away. Note that while your subscription is paused you can still view your records and family tree, and can cancel the pause if you want to restart.

Register An Account With As Many Of The Main Subscription Sites As Possible

It may be too pricey to have an active subscription with all the paid-for genealogy websites, but it's worth registering for a free, basic account. This won't give you access to most of the records (although there are free records to be had for registered users on Findmypast **findmypast.co.uk** and Ancestry **ancestry.co.uk**), but it will enable you to use their different search facilities. Also, if you upload your family tree, both Findmypast and Ancestry will flag up records that you may be able to find for free elsewhere – or you could wait to see if the site runs a free weekend.

If you are registered but not subscribing to a site, you will also be sent special offers if you accept marketing emails from them.

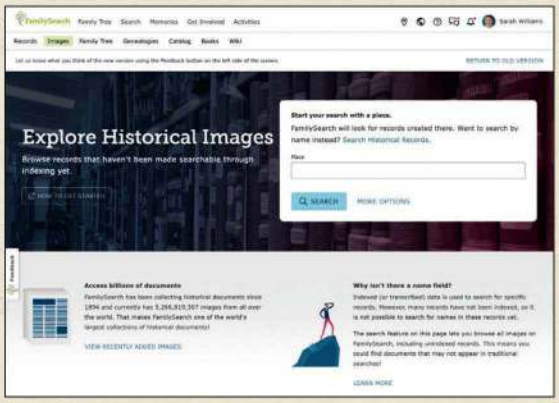
If you are registered but not subscribing to a site, you will be sent special offers

Look Out For Special Offers

As well as signing up to receive special offers from the firms themselves, you can also look around for discount codes. Members of family history Facebook groups, such as Ancestry UK (**facebook.com/groups/AncestryUK**) and our own *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine* group (**facebook.**

5 TIPS TO GET MORE FROM FAMILYSEARCH

FamilySearch (familysearch.org) is the world's biggest free site for genealogical records. Here's how to make the most of it



1 Many records are scanned microfilms that have yet to be indexed. If you had family in a specific area at a specific time, you can see what has been digitised by clicking 'Search' in the menu bar and then 'Images'. Type in the place you are researching and have a browse.

2 Due to copyright restrictions, not all FamilySearch record images are freely available to view online – you may discover that you can only see a particular digitised record by accessing the website during an in-person visit to a Family History Center or Affiliate Library. You can find a Family History Center near you (there are 157 in the UK alone, usually based at a Mormon church) by visiting **locations.familysearch.org/en**. Alternatively you can view a list of Affiliate Libraries at **familysearch.org/en/wiki/FamilySearch_Affiliate_Libraries** including Solihull Core Library pictured above.

3 Did you know you can get a free 20-minute consultation with a FamilySearch genealogist over Zoom? They offer research guidance, and will also provide a free 40-minute consultation to help with any DNA questions. Go to **familysearch.org/en/library/online-consultations**.

4 The website's wiki (**familysearch.org/en/wiki**) is a vast repository of knowledge that is kept relatively up-to-date by a small army of volunteers. Parish pages point to online collections, and the country guides are essential if your research leads you to overseas records.

5 FamilySearch has a giant shared Family Tree compiled by family historians from around the globe (**familysearch.org/tree**). Like all online trees, it isn't always correct, but finding an ancestor on it can lead to new records. You may even want to collaborate and add to the tree.

Special offers and discount codes can help you save money on subscription websites

Newspaper Picks

These websites all offer some free access to articles in historic newspapers

British Newspaper Archive Free Pages

w **britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk**

Findmypast has worked with the British Library for many years to create its game-changing British Newspaper Archive. Recently there has been a move to make more and more of its pages free to access. Just select 'Free to view' on the home page. The same pages are also free to registered users on Findmypast.

The Times Digital Archive

If you're a member of your local library, then check to see if there are any digital collections that you can access from home. A large number of libraries offer free access to the digital archive of *The Times*. Just log in and start searching issues from 1785–2019.

Welsh Newspapers

w **newspapers.library.wales**

With more than 15 million articles to search, this free resource is not just handy if you have Welsh ancestors. Welsh newspapers often reported events across the UK and the British Empire, and published long lists of visitors to popular holiday destinations. You can choose between Welsh and English publications too.

com/groups/wdytyareadergroup), sometimes share discount codes they have come across.

Make The Most Of Any Available Free Trials

All of the main genealogy subscription websites offer at least a free one-week trial. Note that you can usually only sign up for the free trial once, so it's important to make the most of it – especially if you can't justify the expense of taking out a full subscription afterwards. It's a good idea to register for a basic account first (see above) and spend time deciding what you want to get from the site during your free trial before you activate it. Remember you will need to actively cancel the free trial, and check the terms and conditions.

Always Download Records To Your Computer

Genealogy subscription websites have made it extremely easy for you to click a relevant record and attach it to a relative on your family tree. However, did you know that if you stop paying for a subscription to that site, you will lose access to those records?

You can easily grow your tree without spending too much

GETTY IMAGES

You should create a folder for family records on your computer, containing folders for each person on your tree. Every time you find a record online, download a copy into their folder. In the long run this will stop you being tied to any particular subscription website, which will save you money.

Visit Research Hubs That Offer Free Access

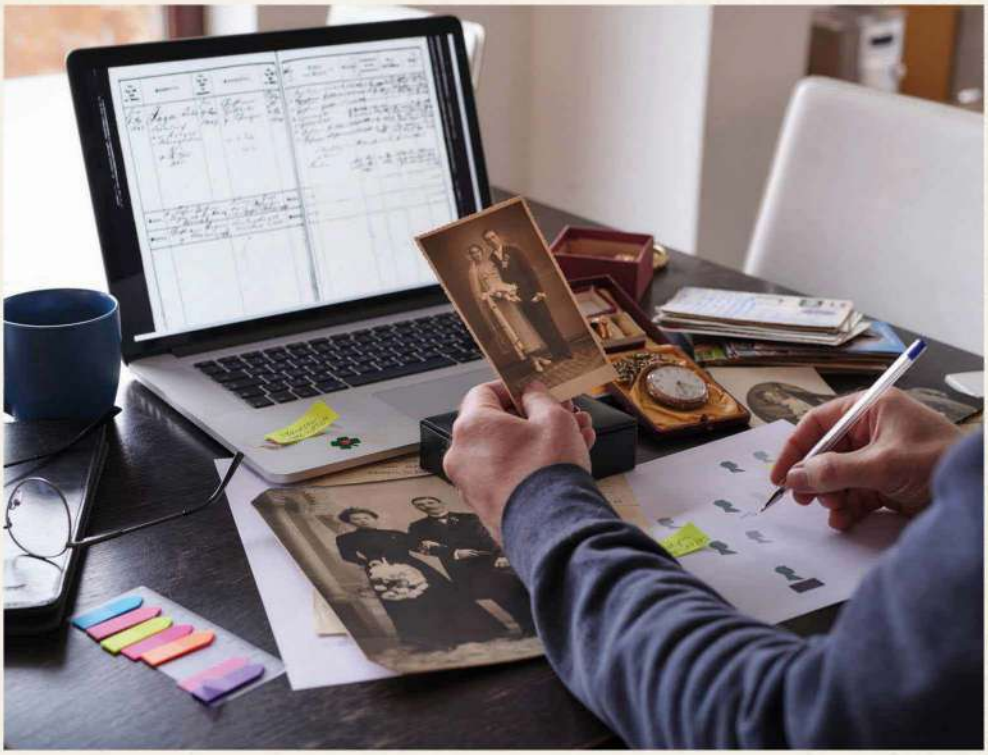
There are hundreds of places across the UK where you can get free access to many paid-for genealogy websites, from libraries and archives to FamilySearch Family History Centers (see the box on page 16). Ancestry is the most commonly available ▶

site, but some offer access to multiple sites. If you are researching Scottish ancestors, a day at the ScotlandsPeople Centre in Edinburgh (**scotlandspeople.gov.uk/visit-us**) or one of its satellites elsewhere will cost you £15, but will save you money if you have lots of records to look up.

Take A Pause From Your Regular Subscription

If you plan to take a break from your research, did you know that you can pause your subscription on both Ancestry and Findmypast? Note that this option only works if you have a monthly subscription, ie it won't work with an annual subscription even if it's paid in monthly instalments. Monthly subscriptions are generally more expensive than annual ones, but choosing a monthly subscription gives you greater flexibility.

To pause your membership, you need to go through the motions of cancelling until the option to pause comes up. Ancestry lets you pause your membership for up to two months per billing cycle, but while your membership is paused you only have the same access as a registered user, so there is not a lot of benefit compared with cancelling your subscription. Findmypast, on the other hand, lets you keep access to all of the records you have previously accessed while your membership is paused (see our step-by-step walkthrough on page 15).



Make sure you download relevant records to your computer

You can pause multiple times over the course of a year as well. So, if you prefer to research in fits and starts, or you know that you are going to be away, then this can extend your membership period for the same cost.

Keep in mind that the pause only comes into effect at the end of the billing period, not when you select the pause option.

Make The Most Of Free Sites

It might seem obvious that free records can save you money, but if you are thinking of taking a break from your genealogy subscription, it's important to know that there are lots of free sites out there that can help you grow your family tree.

We've published a list of the free websites that we find most useful at **whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com/getting-started/best-free-genealogy-websites.**

Cyndi's List (**cyndislist.com/uk**) is also a great way to discover new websites and GENUKI (**genuki.org.uk**) is my go-to site when I want to know what records are available and where they are held – it's also a fantastic site for flagging up free local databases.

GETTY IMAGES

Free Records At TNA

The National Archives at Kew has a vast online collection of free digitised records that are often overlooked. Here are five of the most useful that you can access via nationalarchives.gov.uk

First World War British Army Medal Index Cards Also available on commercial sites, these cards may be the only surviving record of someone's military service during the war.

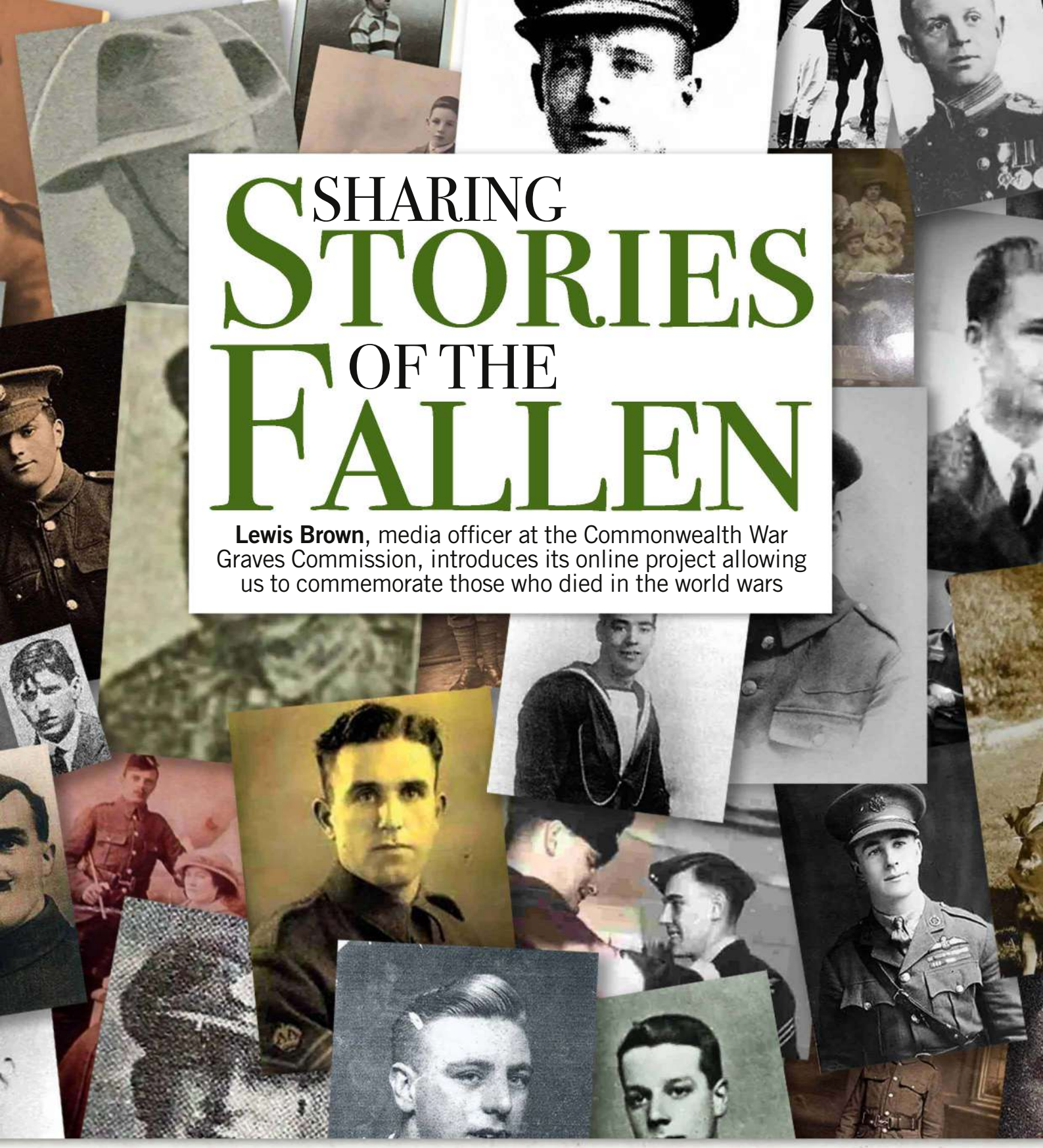
First World War Nurse Service Records These wonderfully detailed records can include details of any injuries that your forebear sustained, as well as references and family information.

First World War Royal Navy Records There's a wealth of free naval records to download from TNA's website, including service records for both officers and ratings during 'the war to end war'.

Naturalisation Records Check these if you see the word "naturalised" in the "Where born" column in a relation's census record. Also check out the collection of aliens' (immigrants') registration cards 1918–1957.

Prerogative Court Of Canterbury Wills, 1384–1858 Wills proved in Canterbury are free to access on TNA's site, although note that the scans of images aren't as clear as they are on Ancestry and TheGenealogist (**thegenealogist.co.uk**).

To find out more about how to access free records on TNA's site visit **tinyurl.com/wdytya-tna-free**



SHARING STORIES OF THE FALLEN

Lewis Brown, media officer at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, introduces its online project allowing us to commemorate those who died in the world wars

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC; **cwgc.org**) is encouraging everyone to dig out and dust off their old shoeboxes, bags in the attic and forgotten keepsakes to rediscover stories of loved ones who fought and died in the world wars.

As we move further away from the centenaries of the First World War and with the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings rapidly approaching, we want to bring stories of the fallen into the light – before they are lost forever.

And to gather all of those important stories yet to be told, the CWGC has created the website For Evermore: Stories of the Fallen (**cwgc.org/stories**).

Whether photographs, videos or memories of something passed down through the generations – if it relates to someone we commemorate (men and women who served with British or Commonwealth forces and died in either of the world war periods) then we'd love you to get involved.

All of the material uploaded to For Evermore will sit alongside – but, crucially, not change in any way – our official records of the servicemen and women that we commemorate.

When the site went live in October 2023 Claire Horton, the commission's director general, commented, "The launch of For Evermore marks an incredibly important milestone in ▶

▶ the CWGC's mission. For Evermore will provide an opportunity for future generations to connect with their own history and learn more about those who served during the world wars."

Enduring Tribute

She continued, "By collating these stories in what will become the definitive resource of the stories of those who died in the world wars, we have created an enduring tribute to the men and women from across the Commonwealth who gave their lives, and we ensure that they will never be forgotten."

More than 2,000 stories have already been submitted since our new online platform launched, and hundreds of thousands of people have visited the website from countries around the world including France, Australia, the USA, Canada, Belgium and South Africa.

The array of stories we have received has been both extraordinarily diverse and profoundly captivating. Each narrative brings its own unique perspective, painting a vivid picture of the past. For Brian Pritchard, of Chester, Cheshire, For Evermore was an invaluable opportunity for him to reflect and collate all of the memories of his grandfather Master John Todd, who served with the Merchant Navy on SS *Bay Fisher*. He told me how his mother would spend summer holidays on board the ship with her mother, father and her two brothers, not long before the Second World War broke out.

"I wanted my grandfather's story to be told and I am happy people can now read more about him," he said. "There is information out there about SS *Bay Fisher* and its crew. Sadly, my grandfather was one of eight people who died during the war after the ship sunk in 1941."

The other crew members who lost their lives were Christopher Appleby, a Royal Navy DEMS (defensively equipped merchant ship) gunner; Oliver Arthur Swatton Dodd; William Harris; James Houston; George McMahon; David Taylor; and Joseph Poland junior.

WATCH OUT!

Although the content posted on For Evermore is moderated, the CWGC cannot guarantee its accuracy and it will not form part of the commission's official records.

Sergeant Isikeli Doviverata Komaisavai, one of the many individuals remembered on For Evermore

In the story Brian uploaded (**cwgc.org/stories/stories/master-john-todd-ss-bay-fisher-barrow-merchant-navy**), he wrote that John's widow and three children were living in Glynn, County Antrim. He added, "My mother was just 10 years old when her father died, the youngest of the three."

In addition to people uploading their own personal and poignant stories, such as Brian's, For Evermore will be a huge, free resource where researchers can delve into the wide-ranging backgrounds of the fallen.

Hero From Fiji

Another contribution that stands out for me is that of Sergeant Isikeli Doviverata Komaisavai, who was born in Fiji. As the story on For Evermore explains (**cwgc.org/stories/stories/sergeant-isikeli-doviverata-komaisavai-fiji-s-first-spitfire-pilot**), Isikeli was a descendant of the former kings of Fiji with the family motto 'Fear God and honour the King'. He served as a fighter pilot with the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve during the Second World War.

The account continues, "When Komaisavai heard that Britain needed every able-bodied man he volunteered to serve. He sailed from Fiji to train with the Air Force in Canada. He arrived in Britain in June 1941 attaining the rank of sergeant and served as a pilot with 234 Squadron."

Other fascinating tales can be easily

Remembering Arthur

A CWGC volunteer and First World War battlefield tour guide explains why she's used For Evermore

Eugenie Brooks of Bagshot, Surrey, has uploaded stories and photos of three of her great uncles to the platform.

"I am extremely proud of my great uncles who were killed in the First World War and feel it's important to tell their story, so their sacrifice is not forgotten," she says. "I always tell their stories when on a battlefield tour in France and Belgium – and now their stories are online, so many more people will learn about them."

This photograph of Eugenie Brooks was taken at a War Graves Week event at Runnymede Memorial in May 2021

In her story about Private Arthur Frederick Whitrod, 8th Battalion Royal Fusiliers, Eugenie wrote, "My Mum Joan used to tell me that when she used to visit her Granny Caroline (Arthur's mum) she remembers Caroline always dressed in long black skirts to her ankles, and had the picture of Arthur in his uniform next to her chair.

"In 1980 myself along with Mum and Dad finally visited Thiepval Memorial to see Arthur's name. We took a bouquet of flowers from Arthur's sister Ethel who was still alive at that time and placed them at the foot of the panel on which his name is carved. He will never ever be forgotten by our family."

You can read more of Eugenie's account at **cwgc.org/stories/stories/private-arthur-frederick-whitrod-8th-bn-royal-fusiliers**.

Brian Pritchard's grandfather Master John Todd and his ship, the SS *Bay Fisher*

found with a few clicks of the mouse or taps on your smartphone, including those of First Officer Amy Johnson, the first woman to fly solo from London to Australia (**cwgc.org/stories/stories/first-officer-amy-johnson-cbe**), and Second Lieutenant John Schofield, who won the Victoria Cross (**cwgc.org/stories/stories/second-lieutenant-john-schofield-vc**).

These stories, among many others, underscore the depth and breadth of experiences during the world wars, reminding us of the individual lives behind historical events.

And of course, capturing the human element behind historical facts – giving a voice to the personal experiences, struggles and resilience of individuals – is what drives our For Evermore platform. It serves as an interactive archive, a space where the relatives and connections of veterans, historians and the broader public can contribute and access these stories, thereby fostering a deeper bond with our past and a sense of recognition of the scale and cost of these devastating conflicts.

In the words of Michele Jennings, the director of the fundraising arm of the CWGC, "For Evermore will enable the Commonwealth War Graves Foundation to fulfil our mission of ensuring those who fought and died during the world wars are never forgotten. It is only through the kind support of many generous donors that we will be able to keep these stories alive in such an engaging way."

As For Evermore continues to grow, it will cement its role as a vital resource in keeping the legacy of the world wars alive in the collective consciousness. It's a dynamic, evolving service that is continuously adapting, ensuring that it remains relevant and engaging.

As new technologies emerge and our understanding of history deepens, For Evermore strives to incorporate these advances. The process of commemoration is ever-changing, and so our platform must also evolve to meet the needs of the present while respecting the legacy of the past – and we'd love you to submit your story.

Turn to page 52 for a step-by-step guide to uploading your relative's details to the For Evermore: Stories of the Fallen website.

About The CWGC

The CWGC's mission is to ensure that those who died in service, or as a result of conflict, are commemorated so that they, and the human cost of war, are remembered for ever. Founded by royal charter in 1917, we work on behalf of the governments of Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa and the UK to commemorate the almost 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth who lost their lives in the two world wars.

The cemeteries, memorials, graves, landscapes and records in our care can be found at 23,000 locations in more than 150 countries and territories. They are both the practical means of our commemoration of the fallen and vehicles for discovery, inspiration and engagement.

We believe that each one of those we commemorate were people like us, with their own ambitions, hopes and dreams. It is our duty and privilege to care for their graves and memorials, and through our charitable foundation (**foundation.cwgc.org**) keep their stories alive. Remembering the Commonwealth War Graves Foundation by leaving a gift in your will, no matter what size, can help us inspire, involve and engage more people, especially the next generation, with our history of commemoration.

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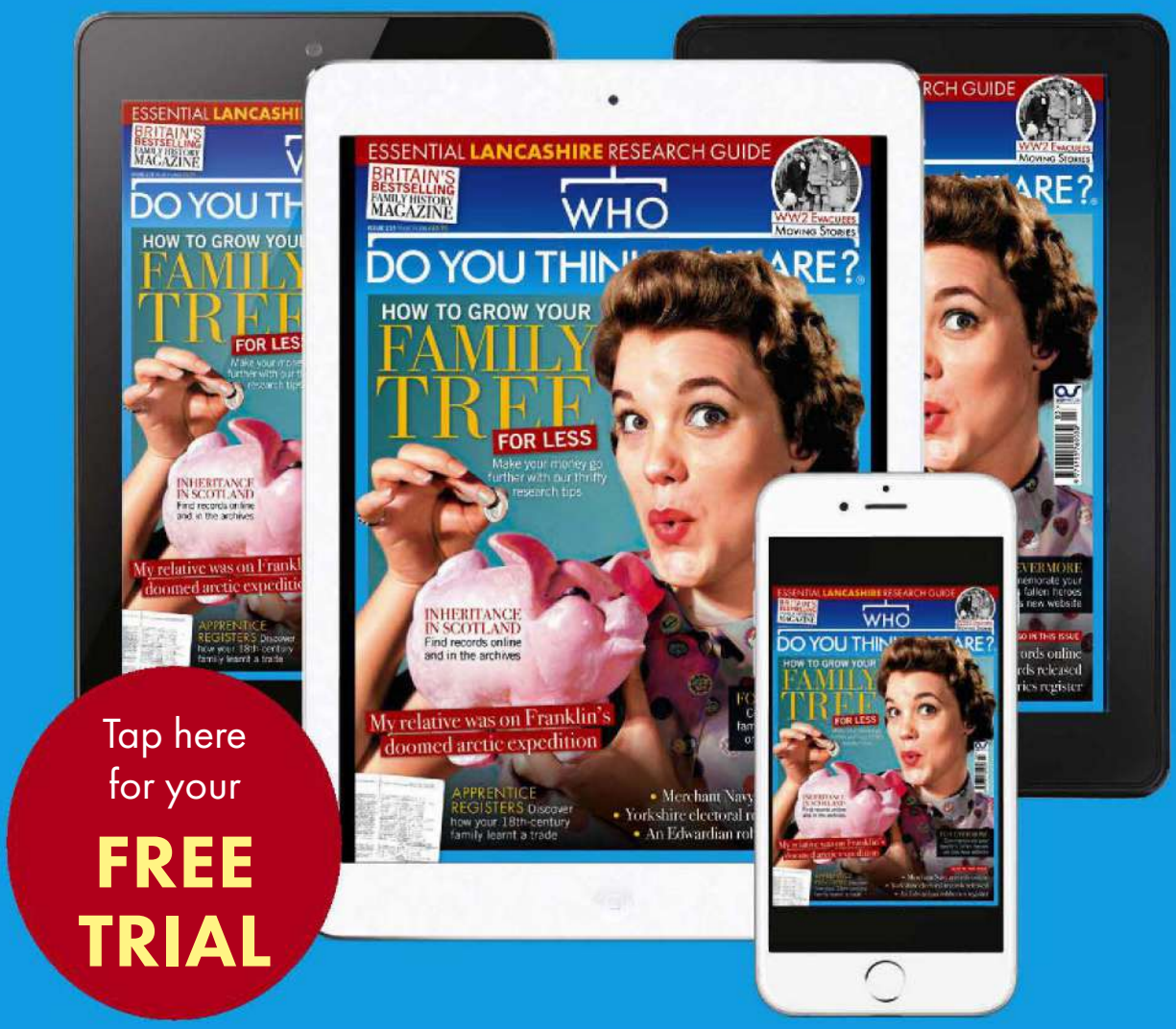

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WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?®

'Francis Led Franklin's Doomed Expedition'

CELEBRATING YOUR DISCOVERIES

Fascinated by childhood stories of a noteworthy maritime relative, Angus Wardlaw has written a novel about his crucial role in one of the world's greatest seafaring mysteries. By **Claire Vaughan**

The neat copperplate reads, "28 May 1847. Ships *Erebus* and *Terror* wintered in 1846 at Beechey Island. Sir William Franklin commanding the expedition. All well." The two ships' coordinates were logged in the same hand. But around the margins of this age-yellowed, dog-eared Admiralty form are scrawled notes added later, some faded or lost to the elements.

One, dated 25 April 1848, states, "The officers and crews consisting of 105 souls under the command of Captain F. R. M. Crozier landed here… Sir John Franklin died on the 11th of June 1847 and the total loss by deaths in the Expedition has been to this date 9 officers and 15 men." And finally: "And start on tomorrow 26th for Backs Fish River."

My father said, 'You're related to the captain of one of Franklin's ships'

Captain Francis Crozier, second-in-command to Sir John Franklin

This is the Victory Point Note. It gives a glimpse into the unfolding of a disaster that still has us baffled and horrified today. It was found years later by a search party led by Francis McClintock under a message cairn at the north-west tip of King William Island in Canada's Arctic Archipelago, and is the most tantalising clue as to what became of the 1845 Franklin Expedition.

Former soldier and creative director in advertising Angus Wardlaw has a special interest in the note, now kept at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, South-East London – just across the water from where he lives on a barge (**rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum**). He explains that he is a relative of Francis Crozier, who captained HMS *Terror* on the Franklin voyage and later the expedition.

Family Stories

"I remember as a child my grandmother talking about Antarctica and then the Arctic. She and my father mentioned Sir John Franklin and my father told me, 'You're related to Crozier, the captain of one of Franklin's ships.'" The family story was that Angus is descended from William, Francis' brother.

The first Covid-19 lockdown gave Angus the opportunity to do something with these half-remembered snippets and he began to write a screenplay based on Franklin's voyage, which eventually became a novel with the title *Passage*.

Francis Rawdon Moira Crozier (born 1796, Banbridge, County Down) was the 11th of 13 children, born to George Crozier, a solicitor, and his wife Jane. He joined the Royal Navy at 13. In 1817 he received his Mate's Certificate, and a year later sailed to the Cape of Good Hope. In 1821 Crozier served as part of explorer William Parry's expedition to conquer the elusive Northwest Passage. He joined Parry in his quest twice more – the last time in 1826 as lieutenant. During these voyages, he and explorer James Clark Ross became great friends.

"Crozier was solid and dependable," says Angus. "He was pretty much the best second-in-command you could ever have." In 1839, he joined Ross on one of the most high-profile expeditions of the day. The Ross Expedition was a four-year exploration of the Antarctic on board HMS *Terror* and HMS *Erebus*. "Ross' principal achievement would be to nail the South Magnetic Pole. They sailed the whole of the Southern Seas, found thousands of new ▶

UNP/TERI PENGILLEY / GETTY IMAGES

"It's a fantastic epic, these men trying to escape certain death on the ice," says Angus

animal and plant species, mapped thousands of miles of coastline around Antarctica, and set up magnetic observatories on St Helena and the Cape of Good Hope. It was an absolute glittering success."

Unsung Hero

Angus believes that Crozier was something of an unsung hero. "Ross couldn't have possibly done it without this amazing man."

Having proved his skills on the Parry and Ross voyages, Crozier was made a fellow of both the Royal Astronomical Society and the Royal Society.

The Victory Point Note has been digitised and made available online

Angus found evidence of Crozier's exceptional sailing skills in Michael Smith's biography of Crozier *Icebound in the Arctic* (O'Brien Press, 2021).

"The Southern Oceans are the worst place in the world to sail, and out of nowhere an iceberg appeared like the one that sank the *Titanic*," says Angus. Ross was captaining the lead vessel, *Erebus*, and in a panic he swung it around as the two ships swayed and dipped on the treacherous sea. "*Terror* had nowhere else to go but straight for the iceberg." But Crozier spotted a gap in the monster as it started breaking apart. "He just aimed the ship for the gap. If he'd got it even slightly wrong, the iceberg would have smashed *Terror* to bits."

Thankfully the gamble paid off. "A lesser man wouldn't have managed this."

When the Ross Expedition returned in 1843 to a hero's welcome, the latest attempt to secure the Northwest Passage was already being planned. Sir John Franklin was to be leader, with Crozier as his second-in-command, their vessels *Terror* and *Erebus*. "On paper it looked really straightforward – just an inch on a map was the key to finding a direct trade route."

In his book Angus paints a compelling picture of that expedition: "The beauty about writing a fictional account is that it's based on fact. Where you've got a gap, I've made assumptions on what I think military men would have done."

The ships set sail in 1845 with a crew of 129 officers and men. They were the most advanced vessels of the time, well stocked with tinned provisions.

In 1846, disaster struck when

both ships became trapped in the ice in the Victoria Strait near King William Island. "They were enticed into the ice with this summer melt, and then it was locked behind them. They were probably there for about two years with no hint of a thaw – it was like a mini ice age."

Doomed Hope

When the men ran out of food they had to leave the ships taking as much as they could with them, heading across the ice to the coast to try to alert a passing whaling ship. Over time, they succumbed to starvation and the cold.

The first rescue expeditions set out in 1848, including James Clark Ross who came in search of his friend. Countless others followed, and gradually the ice began to give up some of its secrets. Several abandoned ship's boats were found, one containing two bodies. Other remains were uncovered – disturbingly, some displayed evidence of cannibalism. One explorer, a Scottish surgeon named John Rae, talked to local Inuit in 1854 who said that they had found a party of 40 white men who had died of starvation near Back's Fish River.

The Victory Point Note wasn't found until 1859. "It's amazing.

UNP/TERI PENGILLEY

Angus' barge is moored near the National Maritime Museum

UNP/TERI PENGILLEY

I was a little bit haunted. Crozier must have known they were absolutely and utterly doomed. There was 400 miles at least between them and any sign of an inlet and whaling ships."

In 2014, the wreck of the *Erebus* was discovered south of King William Island. Its location challenged many theories. "It turns out they must have returned to the ships, and during a slight thaw sailed them to where the wrecks lay. *Terror* was found two years later in Terror Bay. There's a logic now about where those two ships were discovered."

Many experts believe that lead poisoning from the tinned food caused deaths and poor judgement. "My own theory is that they starved to death, plus it was freezing cold," says Angus. However, he concedes that there was some problem with the tins – perhaps botulism – that killed three men found buried on Beechey Island. "They died very early on in the expedition. The crew would have realised and thought, 'Let's dump the tins.'" With no food they'd have had to live off the land. "Maybe they thought that they could dig through the ice and catch fish. But it was up to 15 feet thick."

Angus has used his military experience to interpret a wide range of evidence and make a best guess at Crozier's thought processes as he tried to lead his men to safety. "Modern technology has really helped – Google Maps was incredible. I could see Crozier's coordinates were pretty much spot on. When you consider he was just using a sextant and rare sun readings to do his fixes, it's quite amazing."

Avoiding The Ridges

Angus also used topographical maps to make sense of the men's movements after leaving the ships. "These show the height of the land above sea level. If I was Crozier, I'd have followed some of these inlets and areas that were at zero level so you didn't have to go over the sea-ice, rippled with barrier-like ice ridges, pushing these giant heavy sledges.

"They'd travelled 26 miles from the ships dragging so much stuff with them. I think they'd have done that to cache supplies. Crozier was very diligent; he'd have tried to save as much as he could from the ships."

The tragedy is that when the first rescue attempts were made, many of the men were still alive – including Crozier. "It's a fantastic epic, these men trying to escape certain death on the ice. It's heartbreaking, and just shows that you can't defeat nature."

So is the fate of Francis Crozier known? Inuit testimony gathered by one of the rescue expeditions suggests that in the winter of 1849/1850 a senior officer was buried – along with the expedition records – with full military honours. If the account is accurate, it was probably Franklin – but could it have been Crozier?

Angus thinks not, and suggests another solution in his book. Perhaps the truth will remain trapped in the ice forever.

Passage by Angus Wardlaw is available now from Daredevil Books (**daredevilbooks.co.uk**)

TELL YOUR STORY

Share your family story with us and you could appear in the magazine!

Please write to us at the address on page 6 or email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

Resources

These three resources helped Angus research his book

BIOGRAPHIES

Many accounts have been written about the lives and exploits of polar explorers like Franklin, Crozier and Ross.

MUSEUM

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

a Greenwich, London SE10 9NF
t 020 8858 4422
e *rmgenquiries@rmg.co.uk*
w **rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum**

The Victory Point Note and thousands of other items relating to polar exploration are held at the museum. Many are online at **rmg.co.uk/collections/our-collections-polar-relics**.

NARRATIVES

These are diaries or logs of explorers' voyages written during their travels and sold on their return. These accounts are available for free on sites such as the digital library HathiTrust (**hathitrust.org**) and the Internet Archive (**archive.org**).

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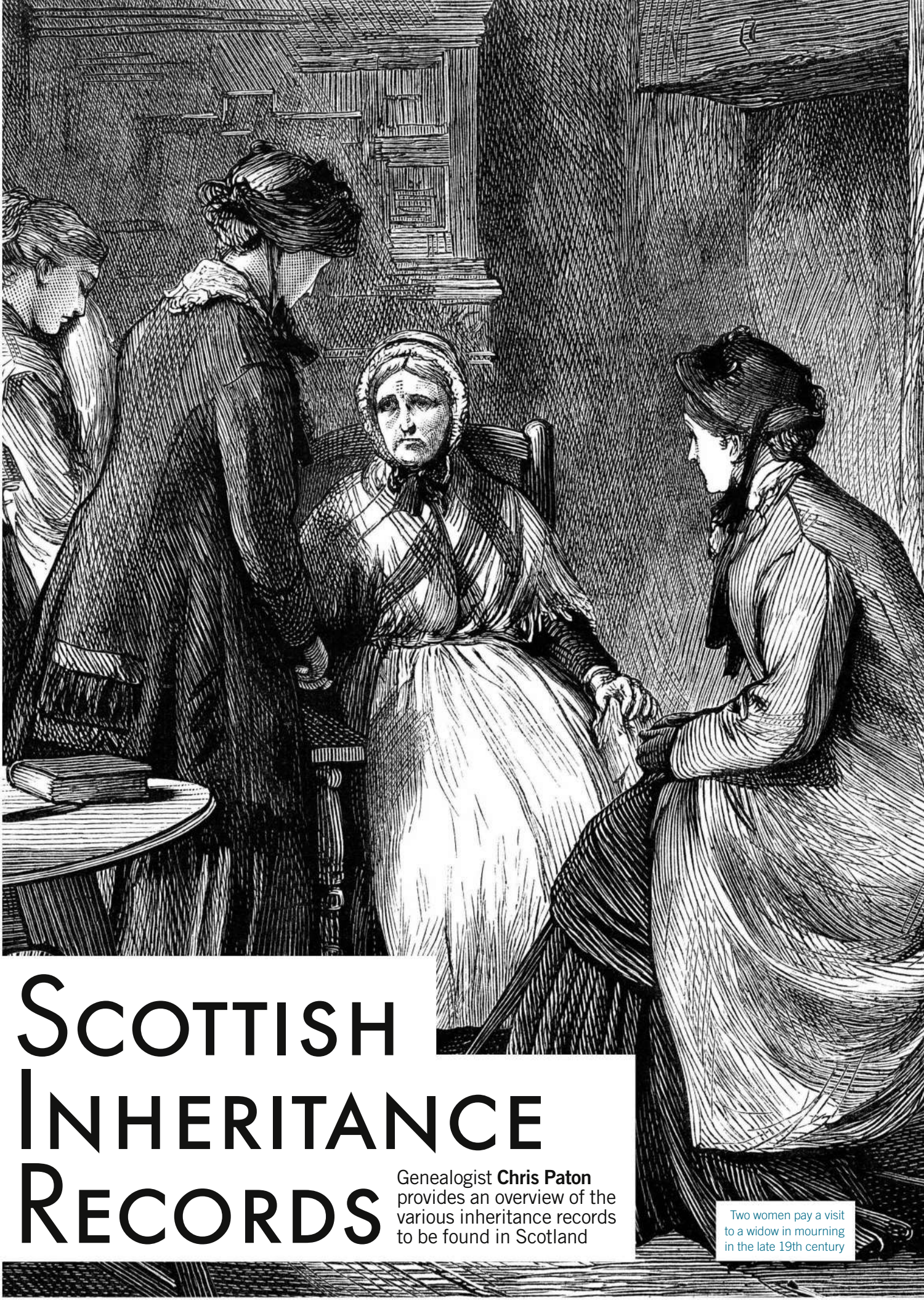


Scottish Inheritance Records

Genealogist **Chris Paton** provides an overview of the various inheritance records to be found in Scotland

Two women pay a visit to a widow in mourning in the late 19th century

GETTY IMAGES

Following an individual's death in Scotland, it is possible for his or her assets to be conveyed to beneficiaries through the courts. In the rest of the UK the legal process for this is known as 'probate', but under Scots law the equivalent procedure is known as 'confirmation'. While the Anglican church courts were responsible for the equivalent process in England, Wales and Ireland up to 1858, it has always been the case in Scotland since the year 1564 that the civil courts have handled confirmation cases. These were initially heard through the commissary courts, and subsequently through the sheriff courts from the middle of the 19th century.

For centuries the confirmation process was solely concerned with what was known as 'movable estate', such as money and physical possessions. Through the Scottish inheritance laws, when a man died, his spouse was traditionally entitled to an automatic third of his possessions (the 'widow's part' or 'jus relictae'), and his children another third (the 'bairns' part', or 'legitim'). Only the final third could be bequeathed as he saw fit ('the deid's part') through a 'latterwill', which could then be taken through the confirmation process. Not all families went through this procedure, however, with many settling the deceased's estates privately between them. Prior to the 1881 Married Women's Property (Scotland) Act, married women could not leave a will, only widows and spinsters, with the estate of a married woman prior to this having been granted to her husband as his 'jus mariti'.

Traditionally the eldest son inherited his father's heritable estate automatically

Appointing Executors

Through the confirmation process an inventory would be carried out of the deceased's possessions, and executors appointed by the court to administer the estate. If the deceased was 'testate', ie had left a will, then the court issued a document known as a 'testament testamentar', authorising an executor to oversee the estate's distribution (similar to an English 'grant of probate'). This would include a copy of the deceased's will and an inventory of his possessions. If the deceased was 'intestate', with no will, the court-generated document was called a 'testament dative'. This would also include an inventory, but without any will included it can be genealogically less helpful. Following confirmation prior to 1823, if some further undeclared estate later came to light, then it could be taken through the courts in a subsequent hearing, with the document issued thereafter known as an 'eik'.

Confirmation Records

Confirmation case records after 2000 remain at the sheriff courts, but historic

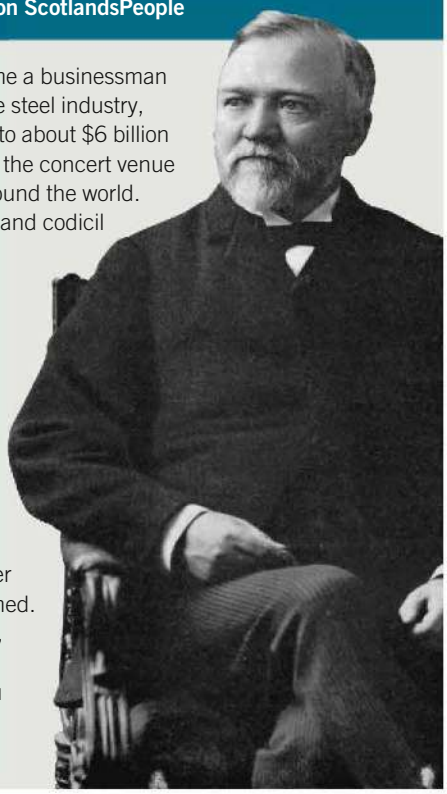
Andrew Carnegie 1835–1919

The will of one of the USA's wealthiest historical figures is on ScotlandsPeople

Andrew Carnegie, born in 1835 in Dunfermline, Fife, became a businessman and philanthropist in the USA, making a fortune through the steel industry, and donating $350 million to charitable causes (equivalent to about $6 billion today). Among the many institutions that bear his name are the concert venue Carnegie Hall in New York, and Carnegie public libraries around the world.

Carnegie died in Lenox, Massachusetts, in 1919. His will and codicil (a later revision to the will) later confirmed in the Edinburgh Sheriff Court on 22 October 1920 dealt with a small part of his estate in Scotland (SC70/4/541 on ScotlandsPeople **scotlandspeople.gov.uk**, pp246–329). As well as naming his wife and daughter, his cousin's wife, his sister-in-law and brother-in-law, three cousins in Dunfermline, and his housekeeper of 27 years, the will also includes the names and addresses of many receiving a bequest from Carnegie, amounting to $200,000. This included provisions of $50 for every labourer serving two years or more on his Skibo estate in Sutherland, and $100 for those serving more than five years, as well as provision of £200 credit for every crofter tenant at Creich and Achormlary, although they are not named.

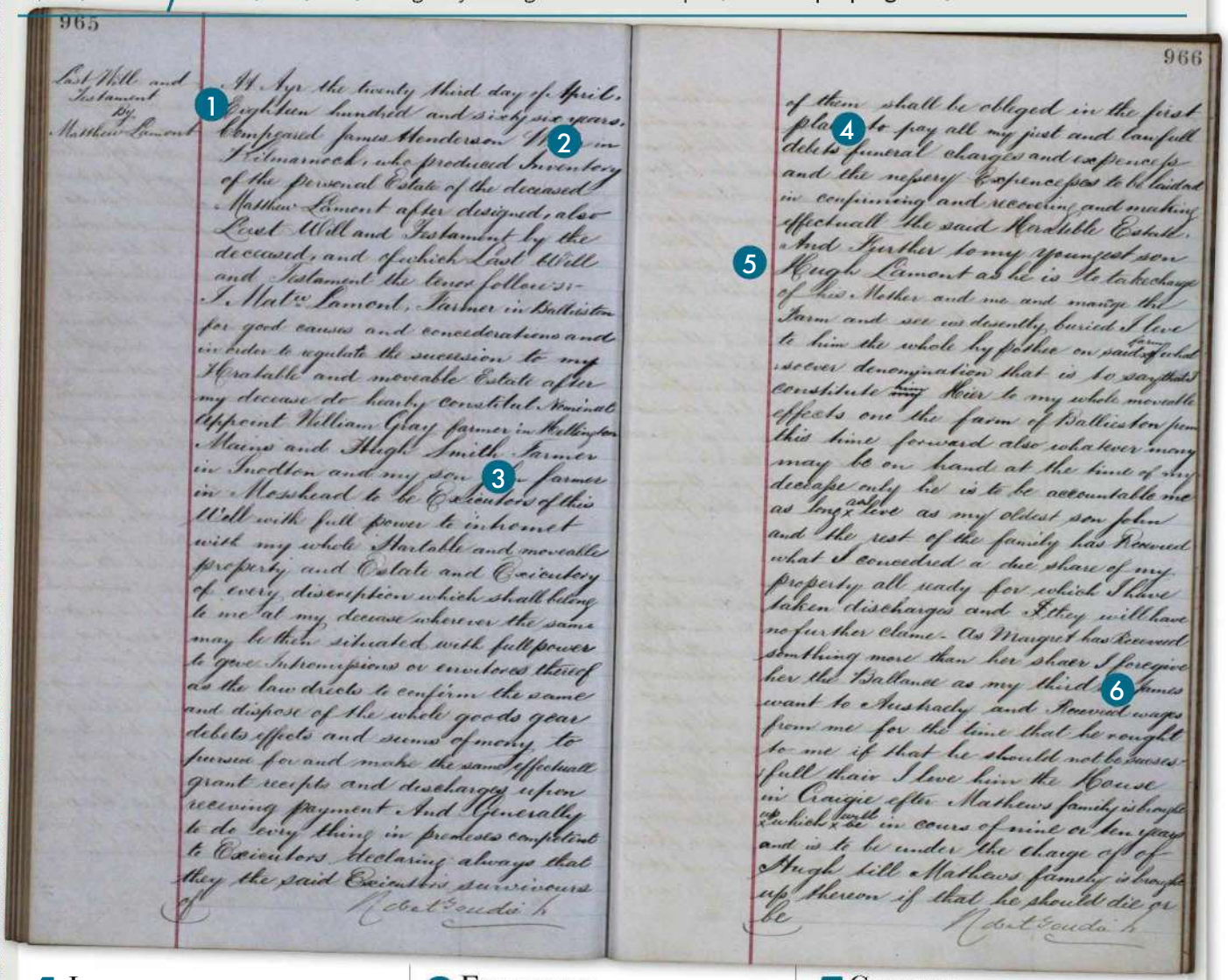
The separate inventory on ScotlandsPeople (SC70/1/654, pp464–480), however, provides 11 pages of names of all vassals and tenants on his Skibo estate, and the annual 'feu duties' or rents owed by them to Carnegie – an invaluable record for local research.



GETTY IMAGES

Will, 1866

The will of Baillieston farmer Matthew Lamont is held by the NRS, and available digitally through ScotlandsPeople (**scotlandspeople.gov.uk**)



1 Introduction

The introduction states when and where the deceased's inventory and his last will and testament were produced before the court.

2 Estate Inventory

In this case the estate inventory is not transcribed. It has been made available as a separate document on ScotlandsPeople.

3 Executors

The will is then transcribed starting with details of the three nominated executors, including Lamont's son.

4 Debts

Prior to any bequests being noted, the deceased instructs that all of his debts be dealt with. This includes the charges resulting from his funeral.

5 Children

Lamont then notes individual bequests to his sons and daughters; these clauses sometimes start with an "item" number.

6 Confirmation

The document concludes with the confirmation clause, confirming the registered inventory and the appointment of the executors by the court.

copies have been transferred to the Edinburgh-based National Records of Scotland (NRS; **nrscotland.gov.uk**) – the exception being for Orkney and Shetland, where the records are held locally. For most of the country, surviving testaments from 1513–1925 can be searched and viewed on ScotlandsPeople (**scotlandspeople.gov.uk**), with records from Orkney and Shetland digitised up to 1901 only. The majority of the records available are testaments dative. The cost to access a document is 10 credits (credits cost 25p each), irrespective of the number of pages. Once purchased, it can be downloaded, but also remains available to view on a user's account. Records from 1926–2000 must ▶

TOP TIP!

Even those who had modest estates might appear within the wills on ScotlandsPeople, while ancestors may be listed also as executors, witnesses, creditors or debtors.

▶ be consulted at the NRS (**nrscotland.gov.uk/research/guides/wills-and-testaments**).

Digitised Abridgements

Although historic testaments are currently available online to 1925, another useful resource is the annual 'Calendar of Confirmations and Inventories' from 1876–1959, which provides short abridgements noting the name of the deceased, date of death, residence, value of estate, executors' names, and where confirmed. This has been partially digitised by Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) as 'Scotland, National Probate Index (Calendar of Confirmations and Inventories), 1876–1936', providing an additional 11 years of online information for Scottish cases: **ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/60558**. These calendars can also be viewed at some libraries in Scotland, and at the NRS.

If no claim is made on a deceased's estate, and no will is left, then it can be claimed in Scotland by the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (**kltr.gov.uk**) for the Crown, as the 'ultimus haeres', or 'last heir'. The Crown has no obligation to honour subsequent claims that may appear, but often does so on a moral basis. Ultimus haeres records are at the NRS, catalogued within the Exchequer and Treasury records (reference 'E').

Historically, only movable estate, such as money and physical possessions, could be bequeathed in a will. In 1868, however, it became possible in Scotland to bequeath land through a will, but if no such document was left by the deceased, prior to 1964 heritable estate continued to be conveyed to the eldest son through the law of 'primogeniture'.

Before 1868, 'heritable estate' (land and property) was handled through a completely separate inheritance procedure, with the prospective heir usually, but not always, being the eldest son. A year and a day was first granted to the heir to decide if he or she wished to inherit the property (the 'annus deliberandi'), in case it was saddled with debt.

Sundry relations – one of whom is using an ear trumpet – attend the reading of a will in 1819

Prior to 1964 heritable estate continued to be conveyed to the eldest son

Expert Picks

Chris recommends these three websites for searching Scottish inheritance records

Ancestry

w **ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/60558**

Ancestry calls the Calendar of Confirmations and Inventories the "Scotland, National Probate Index". It provides searchable abridgements for cases from 1876–1936.

FamilySearch

w **tinyurl.com/fs-retours**

FamilySearch includes the services of heirs decennial indexes from 1700–1859, detailing the names of those who inherited heritable property. Sign into the site to access them.

ScotlandsPeople

w **tinyurl.com/scotlandspeople-search-wills**

ScotlandsPeople's Wills and Testaments section offers access to images of testaments from 1513–1925. Each costs 10 credits (£2.50) to view, irrespective of length.

GETTY IMAGES

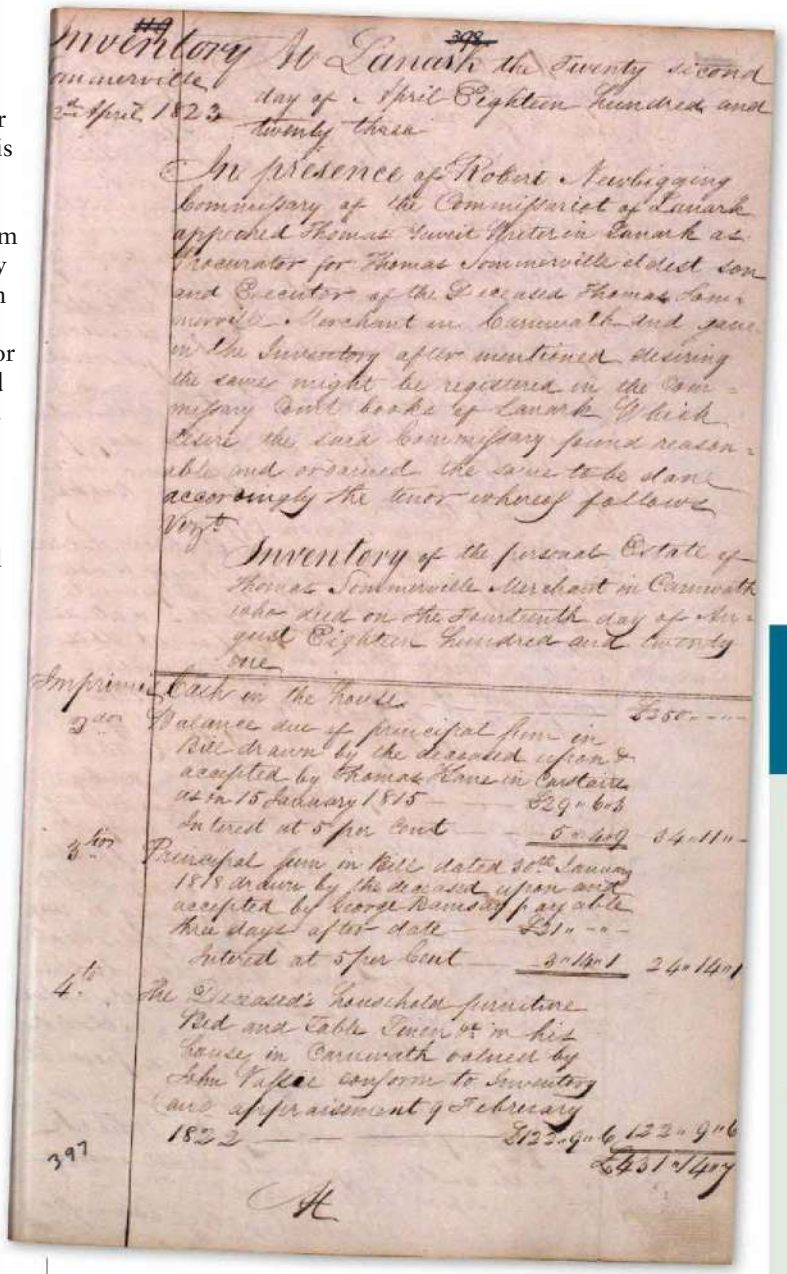
If wishing to do so, the heir would then have to have his or her identity confirmed by the deceased's 'feudal superior', ie the person from whom the land was held by the deceased as a 'vassal' in Scotland's feudal system. The 'apparent heir', as he or she was now known, could do this in one of two ways.

Confirming Identity

If the deceased's feudal superior had been the Crown, then the heir could have his or her identity confirmed through the Services of Heirs court process (see **nrscotland.gov.uk/research/research-guides/research-guides-a-z/inheriting-land-and-buildings**). The generated records ('retours') were sent to the Exchequer in Edinburgh, with indexes to the records from 1700–1859 available on FamilySearch (**familysearch.org**) at **tinyurl.com/fs-retours**. Indexes from 1544–1699, in Latin, are on Google Books (**books.google.co.uk**) at **tinyurl.com/Retours1**, **tinyurl.com/Retours2** and **tinyurl.com/Retours3**.

However, if the heir's feudal superior was a 'subject superior' of the Crown (ie a middleman between the Crown and the heir on the feudal property chain), then all that was needed was for a document called a 'precept of clare constat' to be granted to the heir, confirming identity. Although these precepts cannot be searched for independently, they will be mentioned in sasine records following the land's subsequent conveyance and registration (**nrscotland.gov.uk/research/research-guides/research-guides-a-z/sasines**).

With the eldest son inheriting the heritable property, he will not usually be noted within the wills found on ScotlandsPeople. However, there was a bit of legal trickery that the deceased could adopt to posthumously convey heritable property to whomever they liked, in order to bypass the rules of primogeniture. This 'trust disposition and settlement' allowed the deceased, while still alive, to place all of their assets into a trust. He or she retained a nominal interest while alive, and gave specific instructions for the trustees to enact following their death. Extracts from such arrangements are included in the Wills and Testaments database on ScotlandsPeople, found indexed with the abbreviation 'TD&S'.



This inventory of Thomas Sommerville's estate dates from 1823

DID YOU KNOW?

The ScotlandsPeople Wills and Testaments database includes wills back to 1513 confirmed by the Edinburgh-based ecclesiastical court of the Roman Catholic Church.

CHRIS PATON runs the Scotland's Greatest Story research service (**scotlandsgreateststory.co.uk**) and blogs at **scottishgenes.blogspot.com**

Resources

Take your research further

BOOKS

Tracing Your Scottish Ancestors: the Official Guide, 7th Edition
Birlinn, 2020
Produced by the NRS, this title provides crucial information about many of the records in its collection.

Tracing Your Scottish Ancestry Through Church and State Records
Chris Paton
Pen & Sword, 2019
Chris' book covers the various forms of inheritance and documents available for family historians, including informative case studies.

WEBSITES

NATIONAL ULTIMUS HAERES UNIT
w **kltr.gov.uk/ultimus-haeres**
Here you can find the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer's guide to ultimus haeres records.

SCOTTISH COURTS AND TRIBUNALS
w **scotcourts.gov.uk/the-courts/sheriff-court/find-a-court**
This tool details the locations of sheriff courts, where post-2000 wills can be sourced.

NATIONAL RECORDS OF SCOTLAND

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A Merchant Navy captain and his crew Weymouth, Dorset, 1937

MERCHANT NAVY

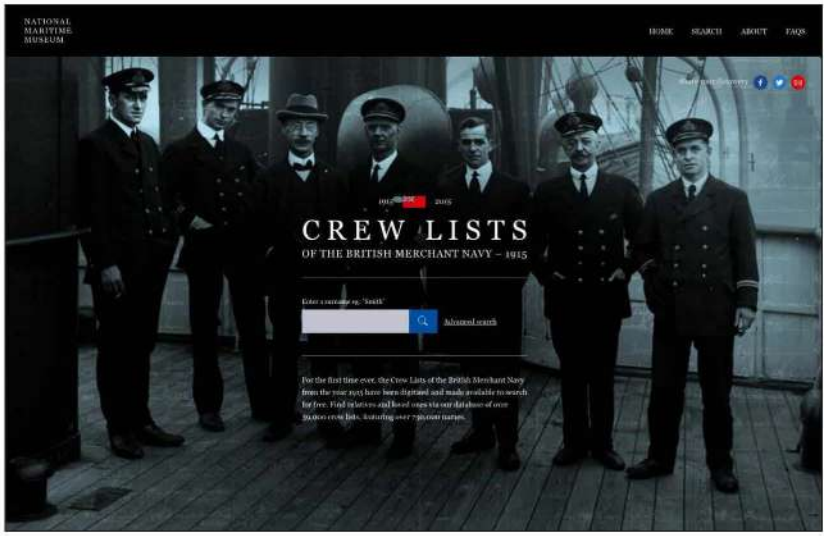
Jonathan Scott explains the wide range of digital resources available for seafaring relations

There are reasons to be cheerful if you're researching a member of the family who served in the Merchant Navy. According to the Crew List Index Project (CLIP; see page 36), "British seafarers of the late 19th and early 20th century are the best documented workers that there have ever been."

Crew lists, or 'crew agreements', formed a contract between a seafarer and employer. They were drawn up for any kind of vessel, from "small fishing boats and sailing barges, often crewed by father and son, to the largest passenger liners with whole departments of deck officers, seamen, engineering and victualling staff amounting to as many as 400 individuals", explains our top pick (see right).

We've selected some of the most useful sites here, but there are many more to find. CLIP has a links page (**crewlist.org.uk/data/external**) with a host of resources, often relating to specific periods, countries, industries, ports or fishing communities. Second on its list is British Southern Whale Fishery (**britishwhaling.org**), which has a database of whaling voyages and crew covering 1775–1861.

GETTY IMAGES

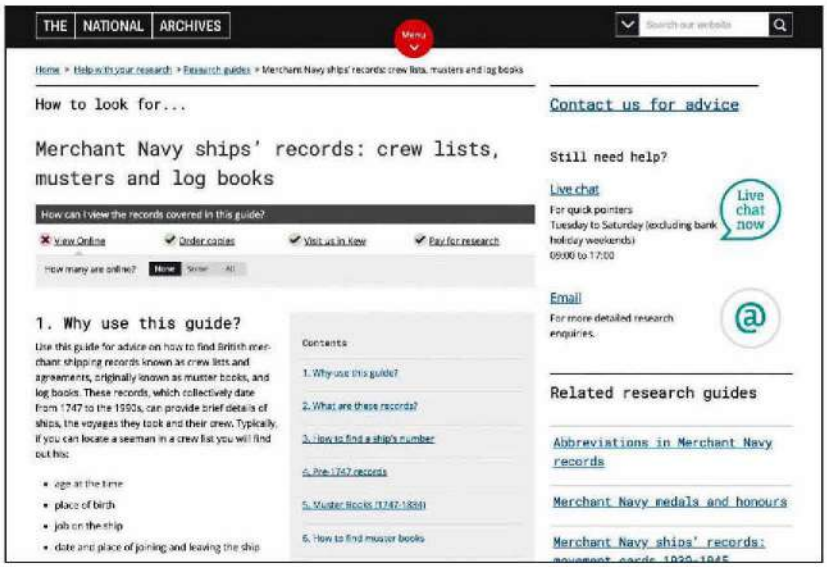


1915 CREW LISTS

w **1915crewlists.rmg.co.uk**

Here you can search a database of British Merchant Navy crew lists from 1915. This was a volunteer-led collaboration between The National Archives (TNA) in Kew and the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, launched in 2012, with input from the CLIP team. The database contains more than 39,000 crew lists from the year 1915, featuring about 750,000 names, which you can narrow by various fields (or opt to search by the name of vessel). You may well find names appearing more than once – masters of vessels that stayed close to home or the Continent would submit half-yearly agreements, containing details of crews employed on different voyages, while 'foreign trade' vessels tended to make much longer voyages, needing only one crew list.

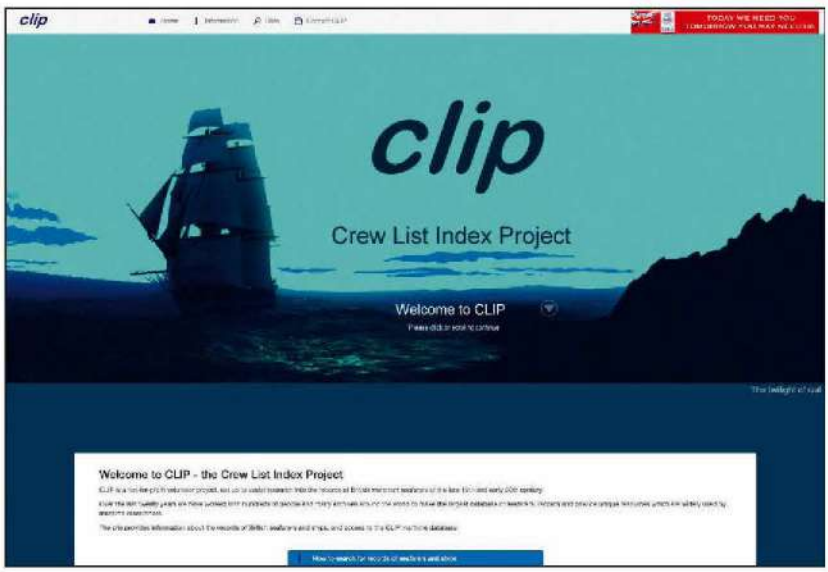
BEST WEBSITES



THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

w **tinyurl.com/TNA-guide-merchantnavy-records**

There are several TNA guides to help you take the plunge into maritime research, from this one covering merchant crew lists, musters and log books, to abbreviations found in Merchant Navy records, to campaign medals and Second World War movement cards. Guides will often point you to sources available through external websites, or material you can search via TNA's online catalogue Discovery, such as records of the Mercantile Marine Medal, which was awarded to merchant seamen and officers in the First World War. If you feel overwhelmed by all of the information here, focus on records available from within a specific time period.



CREW LIST INDEX PROJECT

w **crewlist.org.uk**

Crew lists survive in archives all over the country and overseas. Some sit at TNA, and there are enormous collections at both the National Maritime Museum and the Maritime History Archive in Newfoundland, Canada. However, the lack of a central index means that finding individuals has always been something of a challenge. For more than two decades, the team behind CLIP has been seeking to improve the situation. The focus is on records of British merchant seafarers from 1863–1913, and the project's excellent site brings together both data created in-house as well as external websites.

EXPERT'S CHOICE

Simon Wills is the author of *Tracing Your Merchant Navy Ancestors* (2013)

Survivors of the *Cospatrick*, a frigate wrecked in 1874

Tracing a ship's captain (or 'master') in the 18th and early 19th centuries can be frustratingly tricky. Before 1835 there was no national registration of merchant seamen or officers. Sadly, many men were lost in shipwrecks.

Fortunately, there is one online source that can be helpful for both wrecks and captains. Volunteers at the Guildhall Library, London, have indexed *Lloyd's List* – a weekly newspaper about shipping, which later became a daily publication: **registers.cityoflondon.gov.uk/applications/lloydslist/**. The index covers 1740–1837, although a few years are missing. *Lloyd's List* incorporated all sorts of information about ships, such as arrivals or departures from certain ports, but the index comprises the news articles only. This section typically describes ships that were badly damaged by storms, sank, disappeared, were stranded, or were captured by the enemy in wartime.

This online index to *Lloyd's List* is an essential resource

You can search by captain's surname, ship's name, date and location. The index entries are brief. For example: "ship *Scipio*, captain Watson, 1758, lost with all crew, Scilly". Sometimes a succession of entries relates to the same vessel – describing it as damaged, then stranded, and finally lost. Note that the index omits details that may be in the complete account, such as a captain's initial, precise dates, or the cargo being carried, so it's often worth consulting the full edition of *Lloyd's List*. Many are available for free at Books Boxes & Boats: **maritimearchives.co.uk/lloyds-list.html**.

Books Boxes & Boats has historic *Lloyd's List* volumes

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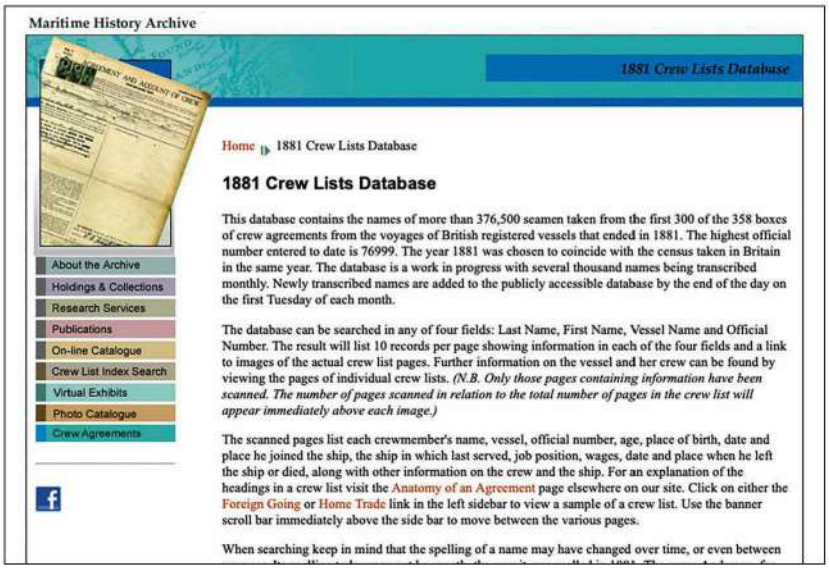
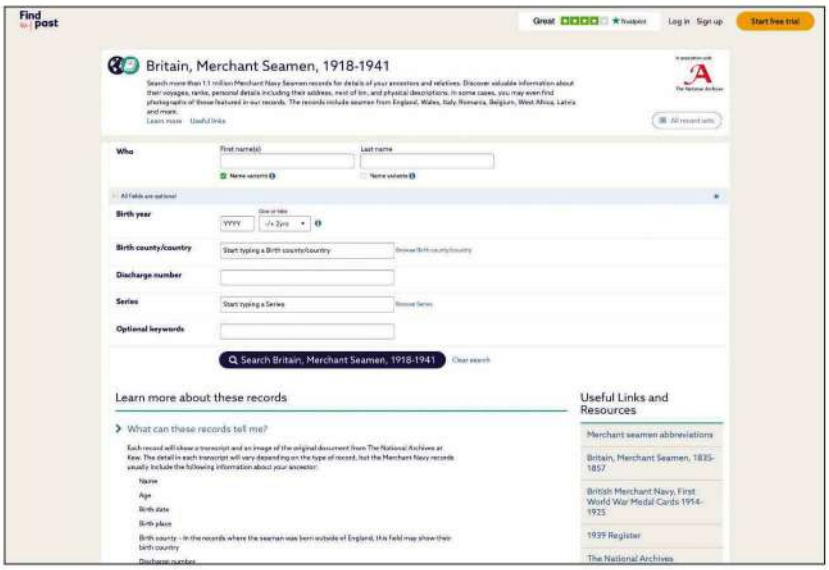


MARITIME HISTORY ARCHIVE

w **mha.mun.ca/mha/1881/crews1881.php**

The national registration of Merchant Navy employees stopped in 1857, and didn't begin again until the early 20th century. Since merchant seafarers are often missing from censuses too, this can cause problems. The Maritime History Archive has created this 1881 crew-lists database to plug the gap. Currently boasting more than 376,500 names, it tells you the name of everyone on board a ship, plus their age, place of birth, role, dates of service, as well as details of previous ships – meaning that with luck you can work backwards through their career. While the website is crying out for a makeover, it remains a vital resource.



FINDMYPAST

w **bit.ly/fmp-merch-seamen**

Findmypast's partnership with TNA has indexed more than 2.6 million Merchant Navy records. The 1918–1941 collection includes digitised cards that the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen compiled between the two world wars to produce a centralised index to merchant seamen. These should list voyages, ranks, personal details such as address and next of kin, and some include photographs. The 1835–1857 records (**search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/britain-merchant-seamen-1835-1857**) were created to document the pool of sailors that might be called on for a Royal Navy reserve, and include a physical description of individuals.

Go Further

Eight more sites that you can't afford to miss

ANCESTRY

w **ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/60609/**

Ancestry's holdings include this collection listing men who were indentured to Merchant Navy ships between 1824 and 1910.

BOOKS BOXES & BOATS

w **maritimearchives.co.uk**

As recommended by Simon Wills, this maritime research service's site has useful guidance and content, including links to volumes and indexes.

CENTRAL INDEX OF MERCHANT SEAMEN

w **tinyurl.com/Southampton-merchant-seamen**

Learn about Southampton Archives' Merchant Navy service record cards from 1918–1941.

IRISH MARINERS

w **irishmariners.ie**

Search details of more than 23,000 Irish-born merchant seamen and their voyages from the CR10 series of the central index cards held in Southampton Archives.

MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM

w **research.mysticseaport.org**

The website of this museum located in Mystic, Connecticut, USA, has several useful tools for British researchers, with material focusing on vessels, crew and masters.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF IRELAND

w **census.nationalarchives.ie/search/cl/home.jsp**

Search shipping agreements and crew lists relating to ships registered in the south of Ireland between 1860 and 1921.

P&O HERITAGE

w **www.poheritage.com**

Find out more about both passengers and crew who have travelled on P&O ships since the company was founded in 1837.

WELSH MARINERS

w **welshmariners.org.uk**

This long-running index contains information about 23,000 Welsh merchant masters, mates and engineers active between 1800 and 1945.

APPRENTICESHIP REGISTERS

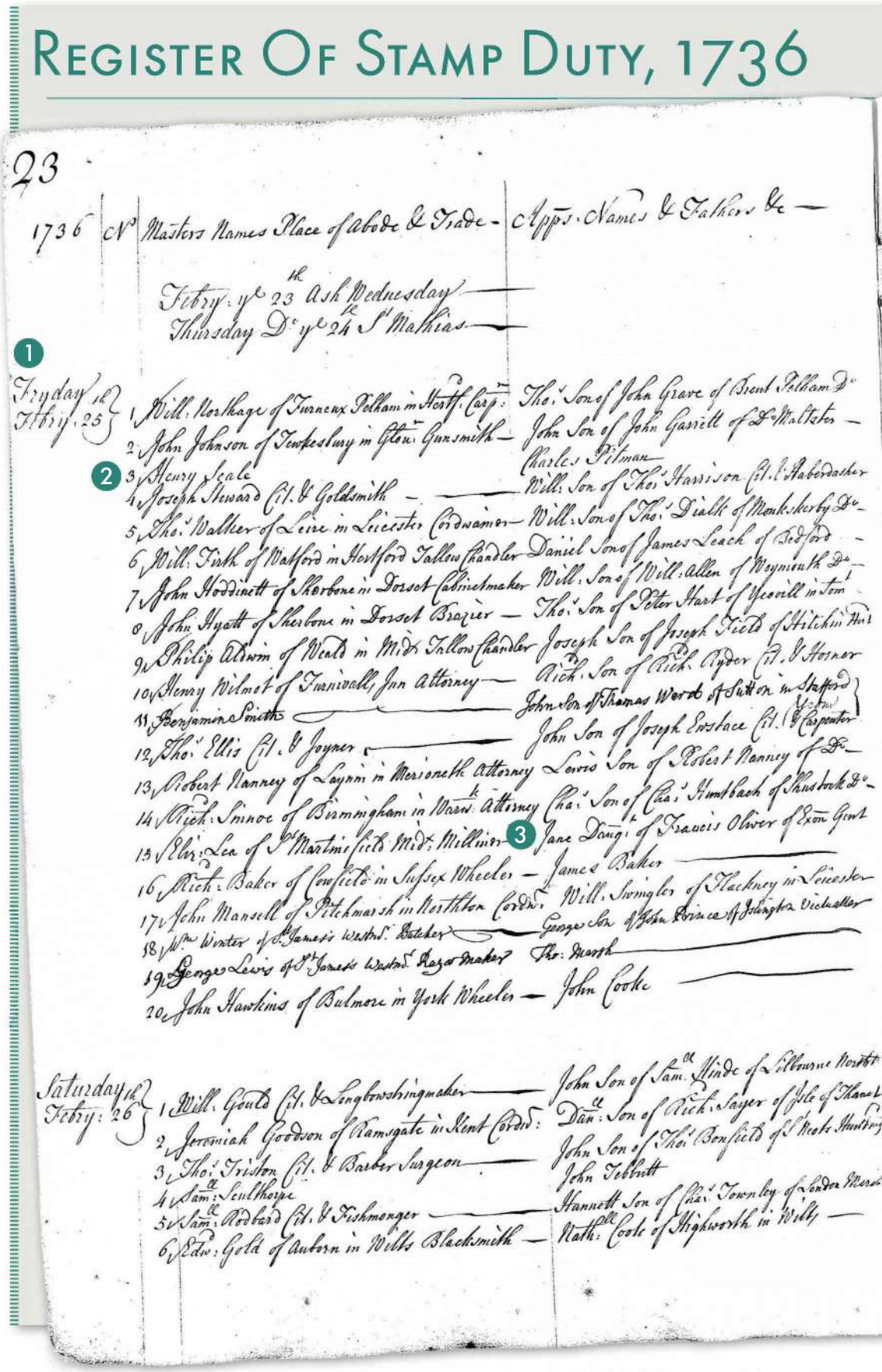
Apprentices were bound historically to a master or mistress, to whom a fee or 'premium' was paid, usually in cash but occasionally in kind. Until 1757, this was by indenture, a legally binding document in which the detail was written twice, signed by the parties involved, including the master/mistress and the apprentice's parents or other authority, who each kept a copy. Apprenticeships usually lasted seven years. Conditions were laid down on both sides: the master/mistress had to provide bed, board and training while the apprentice had to follow stringent rules regarding their conduct, including refraining from marriage. Until 1710, there was no central register of apprenticeships and the indentures are now mostly lost, although some may survive in local record offices.

RECORDS OF STAMP DUTY

From May 1710, stamp duty was introduced on the premium paid to the master/mistress if it exceeded 1s; the rate was 6d in the £1 for every sum of £50 or under, and 1s in the £1 for every sum over £50. Registers of these payments were kept by the Commissioner of Stamps.

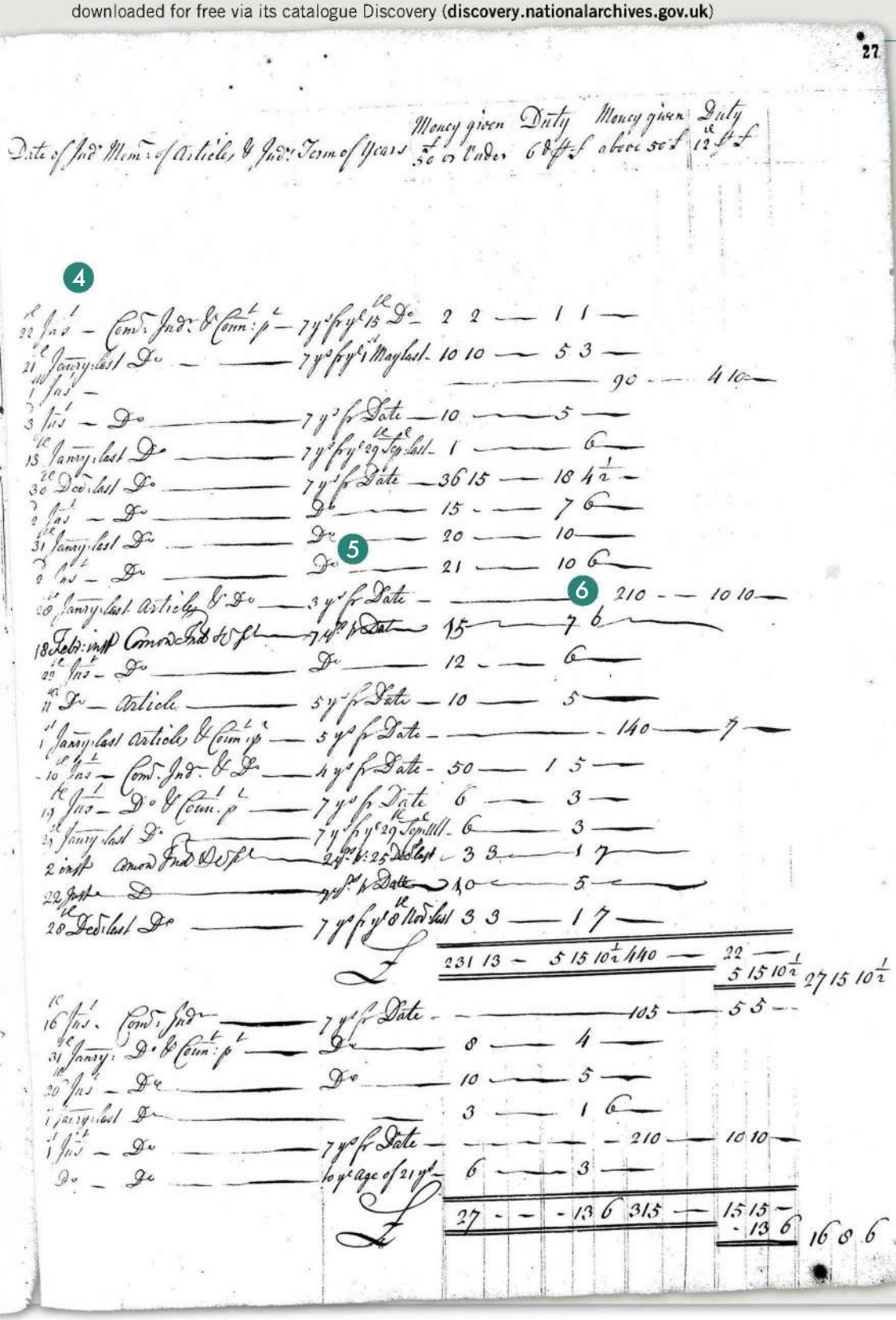
There was much avoidance of the duty, and the numbers of apprenticeships in the registers declines rapidly towards the 19th century. The last apprenticeship listed in the apprenticeship registers is dated 1808. Therefore after this date local records will need to be used, although by this time the whole apprenticeship system was beginning to wane. The payment could be made at the start of the ▶

REGISTER OF STAMP DUTY, 1736



Paul Blake explains how you can trace ancestors who served as apprentices

This register is held by The National Archives at Kew in series IR 1/15 and can be downloaded for free via its catalogue Discovery (**discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk**)



1 Date

This record was made on Friday 25 and Saturday 26 February 1736. The date could be several years after the apprenticeship actually began.

2 Master/Mistress

This column records the name of the master/mistress, their address and their trade. Occasionally not all of the information is included as in the third entry, just Charles Pitman to Henry Seale.

3 Apprentice

The next column relates to the apprentice giving their name, their place of abode and, until 1752, the name of their father or, if deceased, their mother or other responsible guardian or authority. There is one girl, Jane Oliver, who was apprenticed to Elizabeth Lea, a milliner (entry 15).

4 Indenture

The date of the indenture, when the payment was made, is also given, which was often several months before being officially recorded by the collector.

5 Term

The majority of the apprenticeships here ran for seven years, but there are some other periods shown such as three or five years, or until the age of 21.

6 Premium/Duty

The premium paid is shown, plus the duty paid. Most premiums are below £50, but a few are much larger – up to £210 (about £25,000 in today's money).

William Hogarth's 1747 depiction of a good *(left)* and bad apprentice

apprenticeship or at any time up to one year after the end of the apprenticeship.

Masters/mistresses did not have to pay stamp duty on the indentures of apprentices taken on at the common or public charge of any township or parish, or out of any public charity. As a result many indentures were never subject to duty, so were not recorded in the registers. In such cases, surviving local or charity records are probably the sole sources of information. Additionally, informal indentures had become increasingly common, with masters/mistresses teaching their own children and nieces/nephews.

The Stamp Duty Apprenticeship Registers are held at The National Archives (TNA) at Kew in series IR 1 in two main series: IR 1/1–40 (October 1711 to October 1810 City (Town) Registers) and IR 1/41–72 (May 1710 to September 1808 Country Registers).

They include the name of the apprentice; name, abode and trade of the master/mistress; the date of the indenture; and, until 1752, the name and abode of the apprentice's father or, if deceased, mother. Occasionally, some of the required information is not noted. The "City" registers are mainly for London indentures but can include apprenticeships anywhere (particularly Middlesex and the Home Counties), provided the duty was paid in the capital.

Additionally, there is a Ledger of Duties Paid on Indentures (1799–1802) in IR 1/73; and Indexes to Masters, City (Town) Registers (April 1759 to June 1783, June 1793 to 1796, March 1799 to June 1802) in IR 1/74–79. All of the records in IR 1 can be downloaded for free via **discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C9339**.

Many indentures were never subject to duty, so were not recorded in the registers

Helpful Indexes

There are indexes to both apprentices and masters for 1710–1774, The Apprentices of Great Britain, that were prepared some years ago for the Society of Genealogists (**sog.org.uk**), giving key details. These can be accessed by the society's members in its Data Online collection. The indexes are also on Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**) as 'Britain, Country Apprentices 1710–1808', but include the City (Town) indentures: **bit.ly/fmp-apprentices.**

The records in IR 1/1–72 are on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) as 'UK, Register of Duties Paid for Apprentices' Indentures, 1710–1811' (**bit.ly/anc-apprentices**) and TheGenealogist (**the genealogist.co.uk**). These are fully searchable, including by the name of the apprentice or master/mistress. Note that TheGenealogist requires one of these to be included in the search, whereas Ancestry also allows you to search just by location or payment date. Once a relation's master/mistress has been identified, check the names of any other apprentices they took on, since they may have been siblings or cousins.

TOP TIP!

Although there are countless exceptions, apprenticeship (at least for boys) was usually for seven years. It was timed to end when they reached 21, so began when they were 14.

PAUL BLAKE is a genealogist and lecturer. His books include *Tracing Your Insolvent Ancestors* (Pen & Sword, 2019)

Resources

Take your research further

BOOKS

Apprenticeship In England, 1600–1914
Joan Lane
Routledge, 2016
Lane's book reveals how apprenticeship changed over three centuries.

Tracing Your Trade & Craftsmen Ancestors
Adèle Emm
Pen & Sword, 2015
This is an excellent read for anyone who is researching trades and crafts.

WEBSITE

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
W **tinyurl.com/tna-guide-apprentice**
TNA's online research guide is unmissable. In addition to the material described in Paul's article, TNA also holds apprenticeship records for the Merchant Navy (1824–1953) and the Admiralty (from the 19th century onwards), such as in the dockyards and for artificer apprentices.

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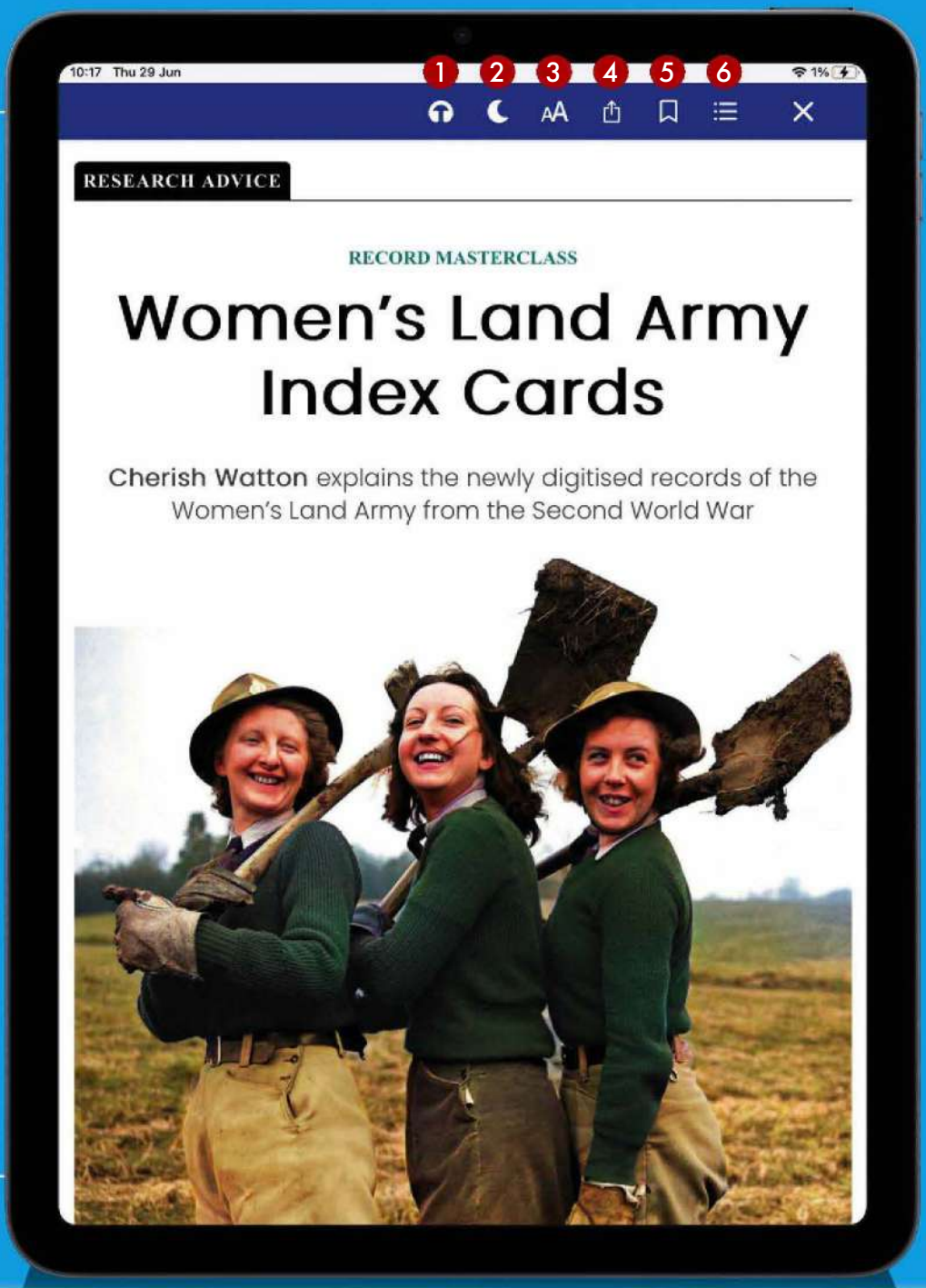

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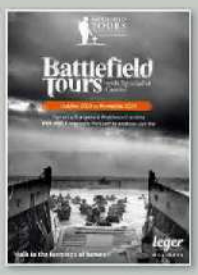

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Q&A

Our team of experts offers tips and inspiration Edited By Claire Vaughan

Dave Annal is a genealogist, author and lecturer

Katherine Cobb is a member of AGRA based in Somerset

Debbie Kennett is the author of *DNA and Social Networking*

Jayne Shrimpton is a professional dress historian and portrait specialist

Steve Thomas is a genealogist with over 20 years' experience

Phil Tomaselli is a military family history expert and author

What can you tell me about Joseph's service?

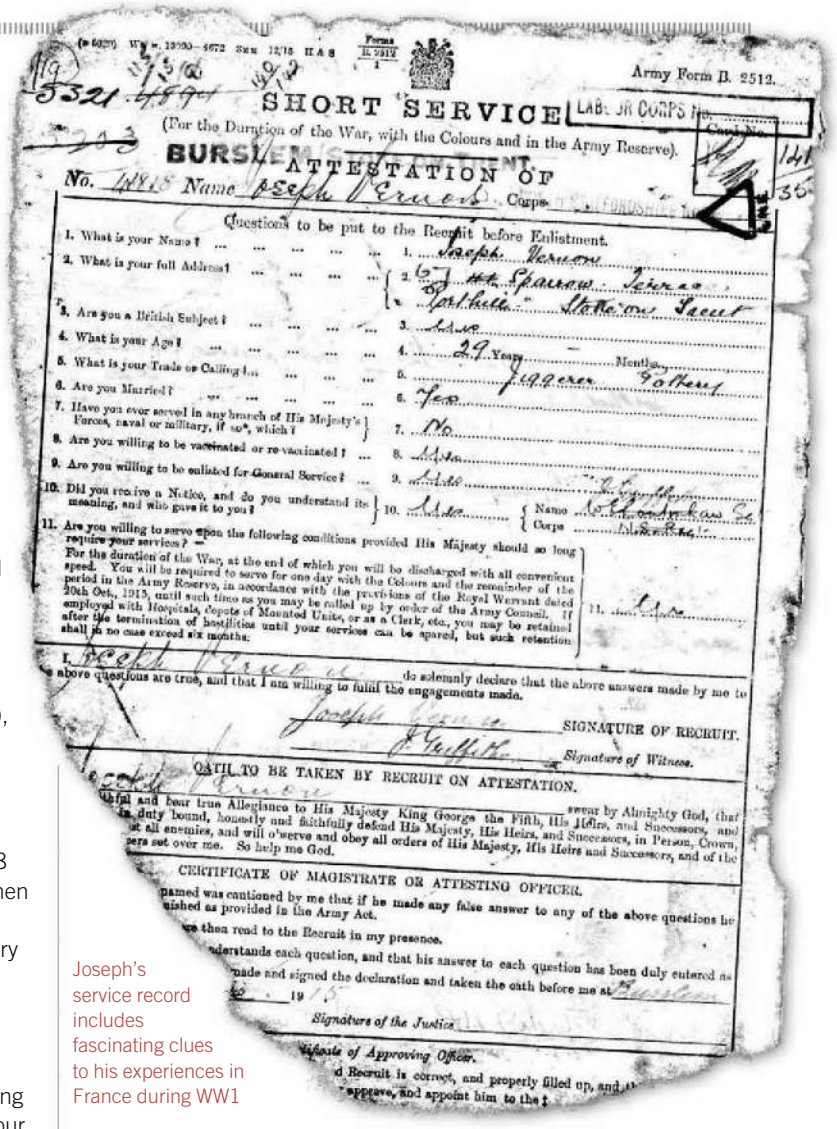
Q I am trying to work out what Joseph Mellor Vernon (1886–1953) did during the First World War. A pottery worker living in Porthill, Stoke-on-Trent, he married Phoebe Turner in 1911 and they had three children. Some service records have survived that show he attested in 1915 and was mobilised on 29 June 1917 as a private in the North Staffordshire Regiment (116815). On enlistment, his height was given as 4 foot 11 inches, which was below the regulation minimum of 5 foot 3 inches, so why was he accepted? He is recorded as being in various battalions. His military history form is blank, but I know he went overseas and was in the Labour Corps later on.
Janet Hurst

A A partial service record is helpful here as the usual route for finding out about a soldier's service, through the Medal Rolls, doesn't help in this case. His Medal Index Card on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) and The National Archives' (TNA's) website (**nationalarchives.gov.uk**) says that his Labour Corps number was 682739 and, using that number, the roll we located only confirms that he served with the North Staffs (no specific battalions).

However, his service record remnants say that he attested on 4 December 1915 (before conscription began, so he could specify his regiment and served under 1915 rules), but was only mobilised on 19 June 1917, being posted to the Base Depot (Whittington, Staffordshire) for training. He went to France in March 1918 (4th Battalion North Staffs), then to 5th Battalion on 13 April.

The 5th Battalion's War Diary shows that Joseph must have joined them while they fought in defence of Bailleul, a small town with vital rail links to the front line, south of Ypres, during the Battle of the Lys. During four days' heavy fighting, they lost six officers and 172 men, and were withdrawn. Joseph was posted back to 4th Battalion on 4 May, then to the depot in August. Then he was transferred "permanently and completely" to the Labour Corps, although I can't decipher the rest. He clearly served in 525 Company, Labour Corps – probably in the UK.

War Diaries for both battalions Joseph served with in France can be downloaded, free, from TNA's website in series WO 95. The 4th Battalion diary from October 1917 (when it first went to France) to April 1919 is under reference WO 95/2488/3 and the 5th Battalion's is under WO 95/3021/1, covering February 1918 (when it moved to France from Egypt) to May 1918.
Phil Tomaselli


Army Form B. 2512.
SHORT SERVICE
(For the Duration of the War, with the Colours and in the Army Reserve).
ATTESTATION OF
No. 116815 Name Joseph Vernon Corps.
Questions to be put to the Recruit before Enlistment.
1. What is your Name? ... Joseph Vernon
2. What is your full Address? ... 67 Mt Pleasant Terrace, Porthill, Stoke-on-Trent
3. Are you a British Subject? ... Yes
4. What is your Age? ... 29 Years
5. What is your Trade or Calling? ... Jiggerer
6. Are you Married? ... Yes
7. Have you ever served in any branch of His Majesty's Forces, naval or military, if so*, which? ... No
8. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated? ... Yes
9. Are you willing to be enlisted for General Service? ... Yes
10. Did you receive a Notice, and do you understand its meaning, and who gave it to you? ... Yes
11. Are you willing to serve upon the following conditions provided His Majesty should so long require your services? — For the duration of the War, at the end of which you will be discharged with all convenient speed. You will be required to serve for one day with the Colours and the remainder of the period in the Army Reserve, in accordance with the provisions of the Royal Warrant dated 20th Oct., 1913, until such time as you may be called up by order of the Army Council. If employed with Hospitals, depots of Mounted Units, or as a Clerk, etc., you may be retained after the termination of hostilities until your services can be spared, but such retention shall in no case exceed six months. ... Yes
I, Joseph Vernon do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements made.
Joseph Vernon SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT.
J Griffiths Signature of Witness.
OATH TO BE TAKEN BY RECRUIT ON ATTESTATION.
I, Joseph Vernon swear by Almighty God, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs, and Successors, and will faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs, and Successors, in Person, Crown, and Dignity against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.
CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE OR ATTESTING OFFICER.
The Recruit named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.
The Oath was then read to the Recruit in my presence.
I am satisfied that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered as above, and that he made and signed the declaration and took the oath before me at Burslem this 4th day of December 1915.
Signature of the Justice
Certificate of Approving Officer.
I declare that the Recruit is correct, and properly filled up, and I approve, and appoint him to the ‡

Joseph's service record includes fascinating clues to his experiences in France during WW1

HAVE YOU HIT A BRICK WALL? Please email your questions or family photographs to the following address: **wdytyaquestions@ourmedia.co.uk**

If selected, your query will be answered on these pages. Please note that we receive a large volume of correspondence each month, and cannot reply to each message individually. You are more likely to receive a response if you keep the question and background information concise (no more than 150 words), with a clear goal of enquiry.

What happened to Great Aunt Alice?

Q I'm trying to discover what happened to my great aunt, Alice Mary Baldwyn/Baldwin. She was four on the 1901 census. In 1904, when she was about eight, she left school in Much Marcle to go to London with her mother's family, the Athertons – Francis and his wife Emma. They lived in Mistley, Essex. She was still alive in 1911.
Chris Baldwin

A Although the admissions register indicates that Alice left Much Marcle School to go to London, since no date is given, this could have been any time between 1904 and 1911. As suggested, Alice may have gone to her mother's family, but having turned 14 in 1910, she could have gone into service. If, in childhood, Alice lived with another family, she may have assumed their surname.

Sometimes, combining searches can help trace an elusive person. By using Alice's date of birth to search the 1939 Register, I compiled a list of everyone named Alice or Alice M, born on that day. Then I compared the surnames with registrations of Alice [Mary] Baldwin marriages, but the only match was a red herring. This suggests that unless she emigrated, Alice had died by 1939.

Searches of the 1911/1921 censuses for anyone named Alice or Mary (in case she was known by her middle name) born at Overbury in around 1896 were unsuccessful. However, since her parents moved frequently, Alice may have been unsure where she was born. Try undertaking similar searches using other places where the family lived.

While other people's online family trees may provide a lead, sometimes they are incorrect. Several on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) state that Alice died in Somerset in 1989. However, from 1969 onwards, the General Register Office's deaths index includes a person's date of birth and shows that although an Alice Baldwin death was registered in Somerset, she was not born in July 1896.

Before giving up hope, fling the net wide. For example, did anyone in the extended family leave a will that might mention Alice? In 1911, did any of the Athertons have a child named Alice living with them?
Katherine Cobb

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

14278465-1

1896 Tewkesbury TEWKESBURY Counties of Gloucester and Worcester

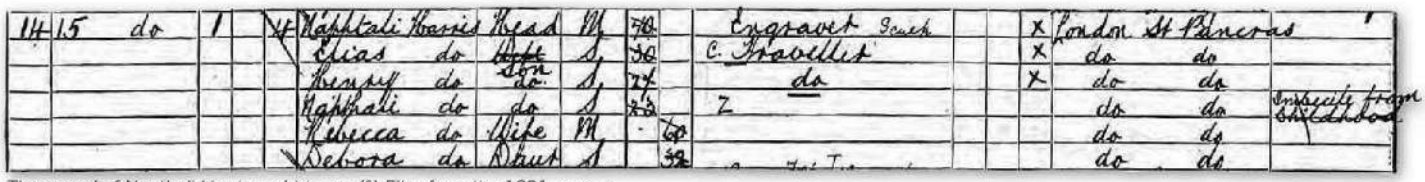
577 Alice Mary Girl Edward Arthur Baldwyn Emma Baldwyn formerly Atherton Agricultural Labourer E Baldwyn Mother Overbury August 1896

13th October 2023

EXCJ 868118

WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY

Chris supplied this photograph of his great aunt's birth record – Alice was born in Overbury in 1896, but Katherine reminds us that she may not have been aware of her birthplace


114	15	do	1	14	Naphtali Harris	Head	M	70		Engraver Search		X	London St Pancras		
					Elias	do	Son	S	30	C. Traveller		X	do	do	
					Henry	do	do	S	24	do		X	do	do	
					Naphtali	do	do	S	23	Z			do	do	Inserted from Schedule
					Rebecca	do	Wife	M	60				do	do	
					Debora	do	Dau	S	32				do	do	

The record of Napthali Harris and his son (?) Elias from the 1891 census

Were my Harris family originally called Henriques?

Q The maiden name of my mum, Eileen Clare (1927–2007), and aunt, Hannah Renee (born 1933), was Harris. My aunt told me that the family name was originally Henriques. I'm trying to find out if she is right and if so when, where and why our name was changed.
Madeleine Janes

A Although a change of name can present additional difficulties in your research, the best advice in these matters is always to simply do the research as you would in any other case and see where it leads you.

I can see that your grandparents, Simon Harris and Sarah Shine, married in 1925, and I believe that Simon was the son of Elias Harris and Clara Michaels and was born in 1897. Elias, in turn, seems to have been the son of a man called Napthali Harris, who was born in London in the 1820s. Napthali's father appears to have been Samuel Harris, also a Londoner by birth. You would need to get copies of all of the relevant birth, marriage and death records to confirm this line of descent, but it looks good.

The point, however, is that we're back to a man who was probably born in the 1780s and the name is still Harris.

It's often difficult to find legal evidence of a change of name because, in English law, it has never been necessary to officially register a change. As long as you're not doing so with criminal or fraudulent intent, you can call yourself whatever you like.

Since the family would appear to have been in London before 1800, they could have been Sephardic Jews, and of Spanish or Portuguese descent. Henriques is a fairly common Sephardic name, meaning 'son of Henry', and its English equivalent would be Harrison or Harris. So it's entirely possible that your Harris family were originally called Henriques, but finding evidence of this is not going to be easy. For more advice on Sephardic ancestry, visit **whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com/tutorials/overseas/sephardic-jews**.
David Annal

Picture Analysis

Can you help me identify this gentleman?

Q While sorting out photographs of my husband's family, we came across this photo, which measures 4¼ x 6½ inches. We are unable to identify who this relation is. If you are able to give us some more information, hopefully we can work out his name.
Sue Gooden

A There are several good clues surrounding this fine family picture to assist with your inquiry. A professional studio photograph, judging from its appearance and the dimensions provided, it is a cabinet portrait or card – a popular photographic format of the late Victorian and Edwardian eras associated mainly with the 1880s–c1910. The card mount itself is also important for the printed details that it bears. According to posts on the photo-sharing website Flickr (**flickr.com**), the named photographer, Charles Amos Welch, established his first studio in Longfleet, Dorset, c1882 and continued to operate his business there for 40 years. There is even an old photograph of his studio, so you can view the very building where your husband's relative had his special portrait taken: **flickr.com/photos/alwyn_ladell/26183745681**.

Over time, photographers used different styles of photographic mount, and the ornate printed reverse design of yours, displaying a narrow outer border, corner motifs and centrally placed lettering ornamented by delicate scrolling filigree, dates to between the mid-1880s and early 1890s. The visual image is also typical of c1885–1893, from the close-up, three-quarter-length composition of the subject, to his striking appearance in high-fashion clothes. He appears to be aged in his 20s/early 30s, so must have been born between the early 1850s and c1870.
Jayne Shrimpton

1 CLOTHES
This suave outfit follows the prevailing slender line that could reach extremes in the late 1880s/early 1890s. Charming young 'men about town', who exaggerated fashion and behaved boldly, might then be dubbed 'mashers'.

2 CRAVAT
Smaller dress details expressed a man's taste – for example, his choice of cravat or necktie. This bold, checked, knotted tie secured with a stick pin was much in vogue.

3 SUIT
A matching jacket and waistcoat were often tailored from sober black or dark cloth, contrasting with the modish pinstriped grey trousers typical of the 1880s/1890s.

4 HANDKERCHIEF
A white handkerchief in the top-left-hand jacket pocket became a firmly established male accessory during the 1880s.

5 FURNITURE
Studio furniture often helps with dating. This wooden seat with velvet padded, tasselled top was an adjustable posing stand often seen in photos from the late 1870s to early 1890s.

6 WATCH CHAIN
A prominent watch chain suspended across his waistcoat front suggests that he could be an office or shop worker, or company man for whom keeping time mattered.

Reuben was the illegitimate son of Jane Fryer who was just 18 years old when she gave birth to Susan's great grandfather

Can ThruLines solve the mystery of my great grandfather's birth?

Q My great grandfather, Reuben Fryer (1845–1915), was illegitimate. Several trees on Ancestry name his father as George Watts. I've been unable to prove on paper that George is my ancestor, so have taken an AncestryDNA test. On ThruLines, I have two DNA matches via George Watts' brother Robert (16 cM, one segment, and 9 cM, one segment). So is George my great great grandfather?
Susan Taylor

A The ThruLines feature of AncestryDNA (**ancestry.co.uk/dna**) can be a powerful tool for breaking through brick walls, but should be used with caution. The links are hypotheses that need to be verified using traditional genealogical research. ThruLines uses a combination of user-submitted family trees and relationship records, such as censuses and the 1939 Register, to provide hints about the pathways through which you are related to matches. ThruLines also provides hints about potential ancestors. The accuracy of ThruLines depends on the family trees – if they contain errors, then ThruLines might not be correct. In general, ThruLines is more accurate for recent generations where people's trees tend to be more reliable.

Your two DNA matches are both on the low side. There is considerable uncertainty with smaller matches – particularly those under 10 cM, many of which turn out to be false. You can, however, use these matches as a starting point. Build out the trees of the two DNA matches back to George Watts at least. Then try to identify as many other Watts descendants as possible. This may reveal matches who share more DNA and where you can be more confident the matches are reliable.

Are you using the Shared Match tool and coloured dots to sort your matches into shared-match groups? If George Watts is your ancestor, you should see other matches with Watts ancestry clustering together. Do the 16 cM and 9 cM matches have any shared matches? Be aware, however, that the shared-match list only includes matches who share more than 20 cM with you.
Debbie Kennett

TOP TIP **It's easy to create multiple family trees on Ancestry, so make the most of it to try to find connections to mystery DNA matches. You may want to delete old rough trees once you no longer need them, or they will become hints for others.**

Where did Sidney Oates disappear to?

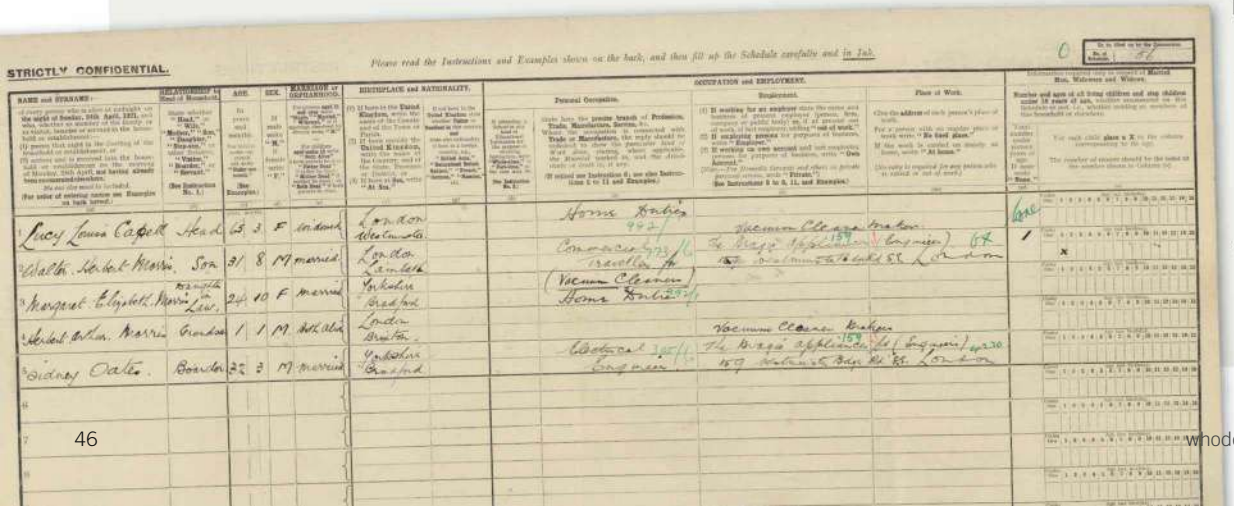
Q My grandfather, Sidney Bertram Oates, appears in the 1891, 1901 and 1911 censuses living with his parents. In 1915, he married Lydia Hall, and they had three children. From 1916 to 1918, Sidney and his family were living in an impressive house in Beeston, but by 1922 were in Poor Law authority accommodation. In 1920/1921, Sidney deserted his family, and in 1923, Lydia sued him for maintenance. I can't find him after this, although he is later mentioned in a will.
Denise Bennett

A Like you, I was unable to trace Sidney Bertram after the early 1920s. Searches using alternative spellings of both his forename and surname all drew a blank. His apparent disappearance suggests that he died, assumed another name, or left England. However, given that in 1947 Sidney's cousin left him £1,000, the first possibility seems unlikely. I note that both Sidney's father and stepmother left wills; does either make mention of Sidney?

The 1939 Register is an extremely useful resource when searching post-1921. The originals for each country within the UK are held by the relevant national archive. Those for England and Wales are on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) and Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**); both offer the option of including date of birth in the search. Working on the theory that, perhaps, Sidney changed his name, I searched for anyone named Sidney or Oates and born on the same day as Sidney Bertram. Three men named Sidney/Sydney were found – two with the surname Oates!

Outgoing passenger lists include two men named Sidney Oates, but neither was born in 1891. However, these lists only include those going to destinations outside Europe. Perhaps Sidney moved to Scotland or Ireland. The online indexes of General Register Office deaths only cover England and Wales, so check the resources at the national archives of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Ireland.

Finally, Lambeth Archives or London Metropolitan Archives may hold records of Magic Appliances, where Sidney worked in 1921 – although they are unlikely to survive.
Katherine Cobb



By 1921 Sidney was living as a boarder in London

Big Question

Can you help me track down Madit Baiden?

Q I'm looking for the baptism and death records of my 4x great grandfather, Madit Baiden. He married Sarah Shailer in Wilcot, Wiltshire, on 15 January 1798 and they had at least three children, including my 3x great grandmother, Eleanor. I think I've found records for his father, Madit Bayden (1733–1818) born in Ludgershall, Wiltshire; and his grandfather, Maudite Baydon (1702–1789) born in Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire.

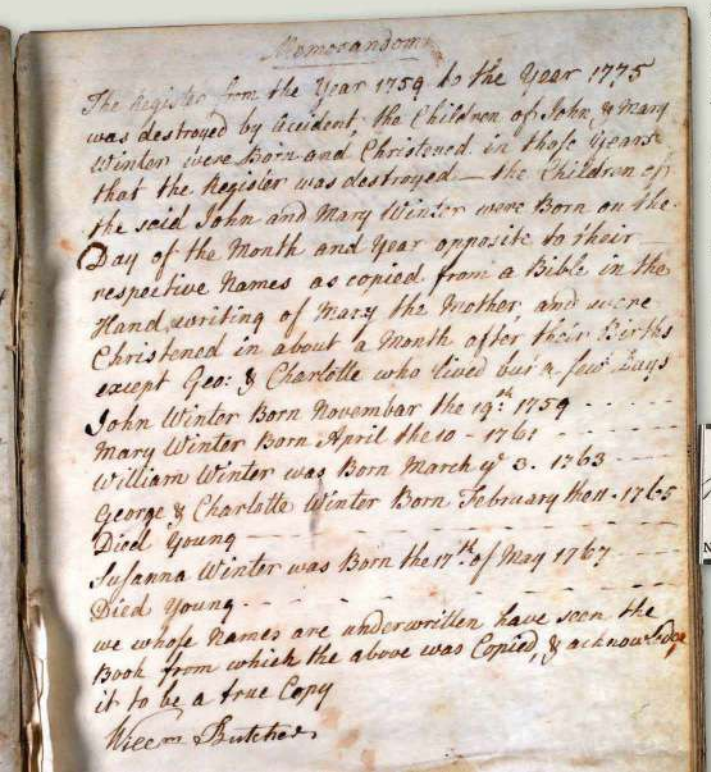
The Geneanet Community Trees Index on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62476**) has Matthew Baiden as an alternative spelling, born Pewsey in 1763. I cannot find his baptism either, but doubt the connection. He supposedly died aged 105.

Lynn Fowler

LYNN FOWLER is struggling to find baptism and death records for her 4x great grandfather

A There is a very good reason for the non-appearance of Madit Baiden in Pewsey baptismal records and this is recorded by the incumbent, William Butcher. He states in a "Memorandum" in the book that the register "from the year 1759 to the year 1775 was destroyed by accident".

According to the incumbent William Butcher, "The Register from the year 1759 to the year 1775 was destroyed by accident"



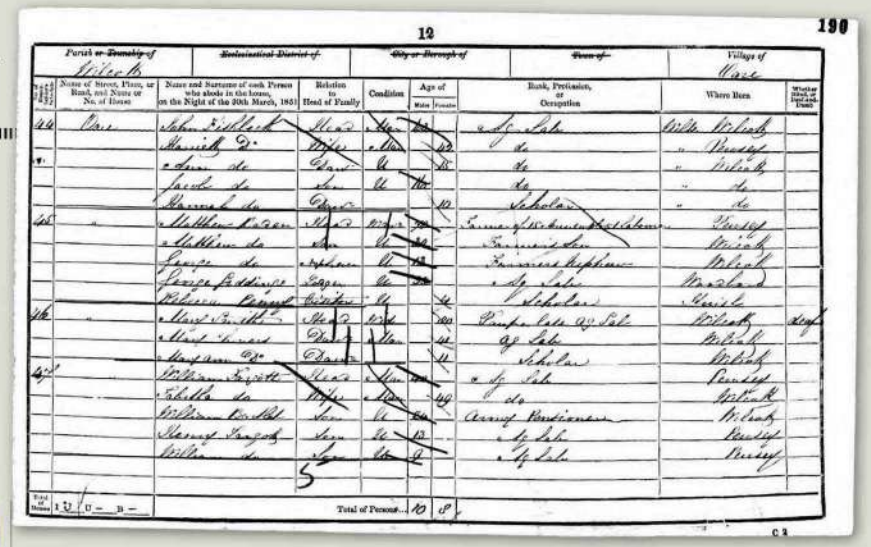
Memorandum

The Register from the Year 1759 to the Year 1775 was destroyed by Accident, the Children of John & Mary Winter there born and Christened in those Years that the Register was destroyed — the Children of the said John and Mary Winter were Born on the Day of the Month and Year opposite to their respective Names as copied from a Bible in the Hand writing of Mary the Mother, and were Christened in about a Month after their Births except Geo: & Charlotte who lived but a few Days

John Winter Born November the 19th 1759 - - - -
Mary Winter born April the 10 - 1761 - - - - -
William Winter was Born March 9th 0. 1763 - - -
George & Charlotte Winter Born February then 1765
Died Young - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -
Susanna Winter was Born the 17th of May 1767
Died Young - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

we whose Names are underwritten have seen the Book from which the above was Copied & acknowledge it to be a true Copy

Wm Butcher



12 190

Parish or Township of Wilcot — Ecclesiastical District of — City or Borough of — Town of — Village of Oare

Name of Street, Place, or Road, and Name or No. of House	Name and Surname of each Person who abode in the house, on the Night of the 30th March, 1851	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of Males	Age of Females	Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born	Whether Blind, or Deaf and Dumb
Oare	John Biddlecombe	Head	Mar		78	Ag Labr	Wilcot Wilts	
	Hannah D.	Wife	Mar		70	do	Pewsey	
	Edmund do	Son	U	30		do	Wilcot	
	Jacob do	Son	U	20		do	do	
	Hannah do	Dau			10	Scholar	do	
155	Matthew Baiden	Head	Wid		105	Farmer of 50 Acres Employing Labourers	Pewsey	
	Matthew do	Son	U	40		Farmers Son	Wilcot	
	George do	Nephew	U	18		Farmers Nephew	Wilcot	
	George Giddings	Lodger	U	34		Ag Labr	Marlborough	
	Rebecca Bennett	Visitor	U		44	Scholar	Uffcott	
156	Mary Smith	Head	Wid		80	Pauper late Ag Labr	Wilcot	Deaf
	Mary Howard	Dau	Mar		42	Ag Labr	Wilcot	
	Margaret do	Daur			11	Scholar	Wilcot	
157	William Lovett	Head	Mar		40	Ag Labr	Pewsey	
	Sibella do	Wife	Mar		40	do	Wilcot	
	William Randall	Son	U	20		Army Pensioner	Wilcot	
	Henry Joseph	Son	U	13		Ag Labr	Pewsey	
	Willm do	Son	U	11		Ag Labr	Pewsey	
				5				

Total of Persons ... 10 8

C 3

Matthew Baiden is recorded as 78 years old in the 1851 census

The obvious recourse in such a situation is to consult the Bishops' Transcripts (BTs), which are near-contemporary records. Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre explained that there are surviving BTs for 1710–1727, 1751–1752, 1756–1760 and 1767–1812. There are none for 1761–1766 when a 105-year-old Matthew Baiden would have been born.

Those for 1777–1781, the range of birth years suggested by the 1841 census, and 1772/1773 suggested by the 1851 census, should both be covered by the BTs, were it not for a caveat provided by the History Centre: "As is common with BTs, the number of names recorded seems quite low. The Wiltshire Family History Society (**wiltshirefhs.co.uk**) has transcribed any names from the BTs that do not appear in the parish registers, and I'm afraid there are no baptisms for a Madit/Matthew Baiden. There is however a baptism for a Hester Baiden, daughter of Madit and Jane, on 7 June 1772."

So not only are there gaps in Pewsey's original parish registers, but the BTs are deficient.

I am not sure that the family made wills, having found none locally, but it is worth looking further afield and taking into account Kimpton and Shailer grandparents.

In addition, Matthew Baiden registered his premises in Oare as an Independent Meeting House in 1824, so try looking in nonconformist records to see if the family were dissenters. There may be alternative vital records.

Regarding his age at death, the parish register records his burial at age 105 in 1869. The comment "reputed" is written over the age, but the hand does not look contemporary to the entry.

His wildly inconsistent age contrasts with that of his servant, George Giddings, who appears in the same censuses with dates of birth recorded as 1817–1822 in 1841, 1818 in 1851 and 1817 in 1861. He was actually baptised on 9 June 1816 in Woodborough. So the Matthew Baiden who says he is 99 years old in 1861 is that same person who also gives around 1780 and 1773 as his year of birth. This seems to be a case of someone being much fêted for his age, increasing it as years go by in order to gain some kudos from his longevity.

Likely siblings in Pewsey registers are Ann, baptised in 1770; another Ann in 1781; and Hester in 1772. A burial for a Jane, daughter of Meredith and Jane, appears in the BTs in 1779. So the family were in Pewsey between 1763 and 1780, and it would appear that Matthew/Madit's baptism is among those records lost when the register was accidentally destroyed.

Although the Pewsey Baiden entries strongly suggest his parents are Madit and Jane, you will have to look further for corroboration of this in other records – difficult, but not impossible.

Steve Thomas

Matthew Baiden	Oare	May 17th	Reputed 105 years	of Senile Decay	

No. 51

According to this entry in the parish register, Matthew Baiden was reputed to be 105 years old when he died in 1869 – but a wide range of records suggests that this wasn't true

What did Frederick do in WW1?

Q Frederick Mitchell *(seated)* was born on 15 September 1887. I believe the photo dates from the First World War. What can you tell me about his service?
Sophie Piper

A This is a studio portrait of two volunteers for the Royal Fusiliers in 1915, probably taken in Hounslow.

I searched the online collection of Medal Index Cards (1914–1920) on the website of The National Archives (TNA) at **tinyurl.com/tna-guide-mics** for men named Frederick Mitchell, finding nine cards. I discarded men with a middle name, as Frederick doesn't seem to have had one, and one who previously served in the East Kent Regiment.

Of the remaining three cards, two belonged to the same man: Private Frederick Mitchell, 26979, Royal Fusiliers and Lance-Corporal, 60412, Labour Corps. His pension card (on the Ancestry-owned Fold3; **fold3.com**) says he lived in Shouldham, Norfolk, and he's there in the 1921 census. The only other candidate is Frederick Mitchell, Private GS/20572, the Royal Fusiliers. It would make sense for Frederick to have enlisted in the Fusiliers because they're also called the City of London Regiment.

His card says that Frederick was awarded the British War and Victory Medals, and the roll (on Ancestry; **ancestry.co.uk**) shows that he served in the 7th Battalion Royal Fusiliers, in France between 23 February 1917 and 17 February 1919. His battalion fought at Arras and Passchendaele in 1917 and in 1918 on the Somme and during the Advance to Victory. There's no surviving service record for him.

TNA holds the War Diary for the 7th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (WO 95/3119/1). You can download it for free via **discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk**.
Phil Tomaselli

1 CAPS

Both of the men in the photograph still wear stiff-topped caps, probably newly issued. These were a nuisance in the trenches, and men learned to remove the cap stiffener when they went to France. It made the caps both more comfortable and less recognisable.

2 BADGES

The badge is a fusil (an old type of grenade) and although other regiments wore variants, the size of this particular flame confirms that the badge belongs to the Royal Fusiliers. They were one of the oldest regiments in the British Army.

3 BELT BUCKLES

There was a shortage of correct belt buckles in 1915. As a result the old-pattern snake-buckle belt was temporarily revived, as can be seen on both men here.

4 POCKETS

Normally the tunic pockets would have a central pleat but, to save time and costs, during 1915 they were produced pleatless, thus giving the year.

5 CANES

Both men have walking-out or 'swagger' canes, standard issue prewar but not after stocks ran out in 1915. This is probably earlier in 1915 rather than later.

MERCHANDISE

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OCTOBER 2023
- House history
- Military awards
- Second Boer War
- Somerset kin

Issue 210
NOVEMBER 2023
- Female lines
- Guilds & freemen
- Army officers
- Cambridgeshire

Issue 211
DECEMBER 2023
- DNA testing
- Tracing musicians
- Pubs & publicans
- Staffordshire kin

Issue 212
CHRISTMAS 2023
- 12 projects
- Old newspapers
- WW2 POWs
- London kin

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JANUARY 2024
- 50 websites
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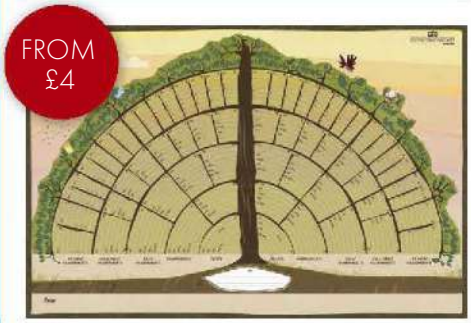

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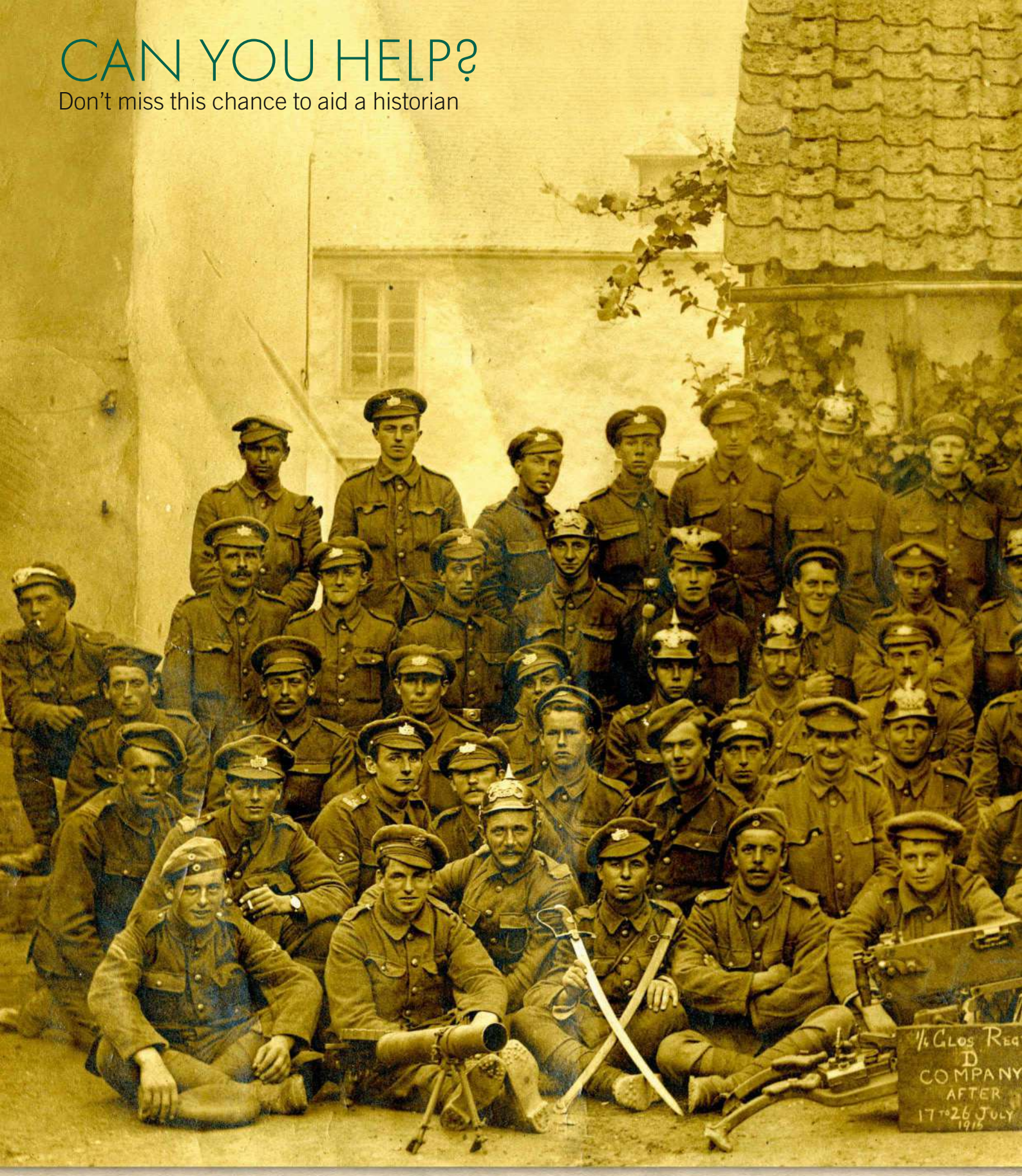
CAN YOU HELP?

Don't miss this chance to aid a historian



HISTORY'S HEROES

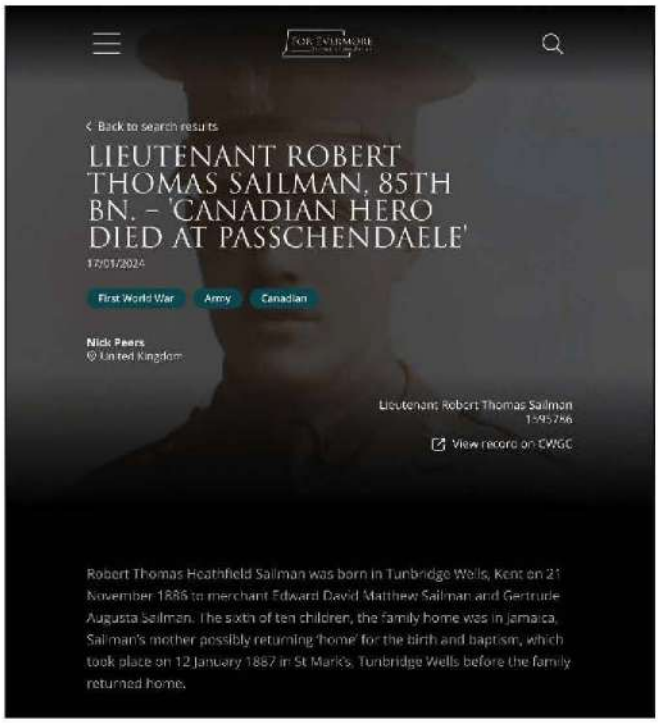
Bristol-based historian **Ian Chard** shares an evocative photograph from the Western Front – and asks if you recognise any of the depicted men from your own family tree

This photo, taken on 29 July 1916, shows "all the men that could parade" of D Company of the 1/4th (City of Bristol) Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment. Photographed behind the line at Beauval, these men were the survivors of the 200-strong company that had assaulted the ruined village of Ovillers-la-Boiselle on 17 July. Having captured the German front-line trench they were withdrawn, and show off their booty: German helmets, a sword and a Maxim machine gun.

Of these 77 faces only eight of the men have been identified: Captain Gilbert Castle; 2nd Lieutenant C Holland; privates Harold Beck, Charles Bowyer, Henry Stevens, Edwin Vickerage and Edwin Wood; and Sergeant William 'Bill' Taylor, who married one of my great grandmother's children.

Since this was a Territorial Army battalion the men were probably from Bristol, although their descendants could be anywhere now.

If you can identify any of the men in the photograph please email Ian on *ian.chard@talktalk.net*



Share the story of a fallen relation online

Nick Peers explains how to upload your own contributions to the CWGC's site For Evermore

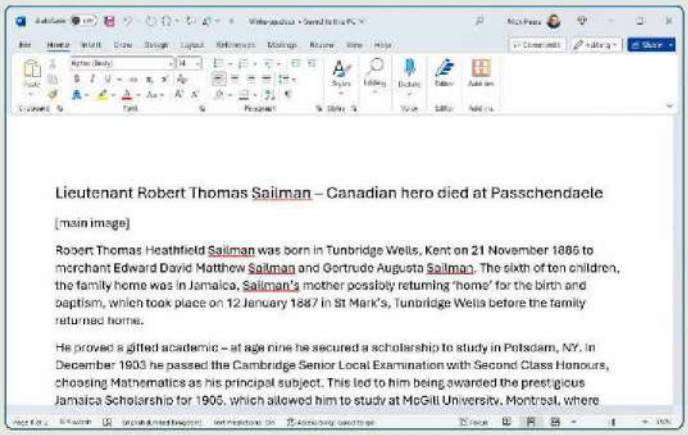
For Evermore: Stories of the Fallen is a new online platform launched in October 2023 by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (**cwgc.org**) that aims to provide visitors with more rounded histories of the people who fell during the two world wars. It's a voluntary project that can include stories about anyone recorded as a casualty on the CWGC's website, which covers the almost 1.7 million people who are buried or commemorated on memorials across 23,000 sites administered by the commission.

The CWGC is keen to point out that all of the material and stories submitted to it aren't independently vetted, so should therefore be considered unofficial, although all entries are reviewed by moderators before being published.

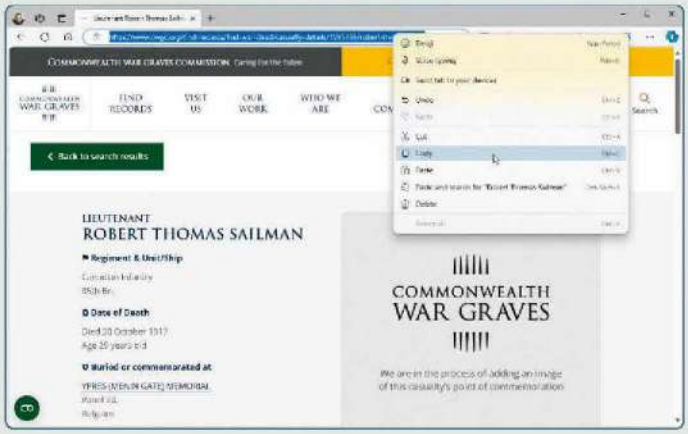
You can find out more about For Evermore on page 19. Fortunately contributing to the website is relatively straightforward, as this month's 'Tech Tips' reveals – in fact, if you follow our advice and get all of your material prepared beforehand, you can upload your fallen ancestor's story in the space of just a few minutes following the step-by-step guide. Note that you must be the owner of (or have permission to share) any of the images you upload, so avoid using copyrighted documents and other material sourced from third-party websites such as Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**).

TOP TIP!

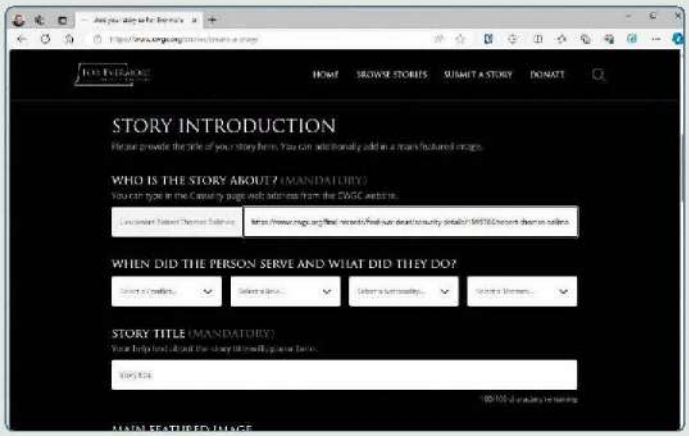
Any images that you upload must be 2MB or less, so make sure that you check them in an image editor and save them as JPEGs to reduce the file size.



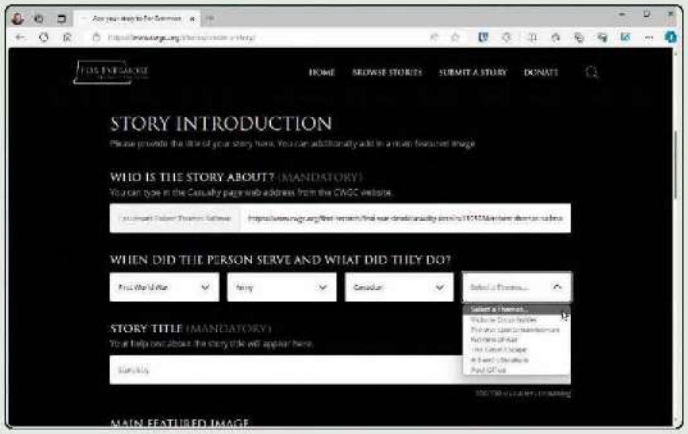
1 Prepare Your Content We recommend taking the time to get everything ready before you begin. Prepare your images – see the 'Top Tip!' – and write your story in your word processor beforehand. There's no restrictions on length, but try to keep it concise and break up long sections using subheadings.



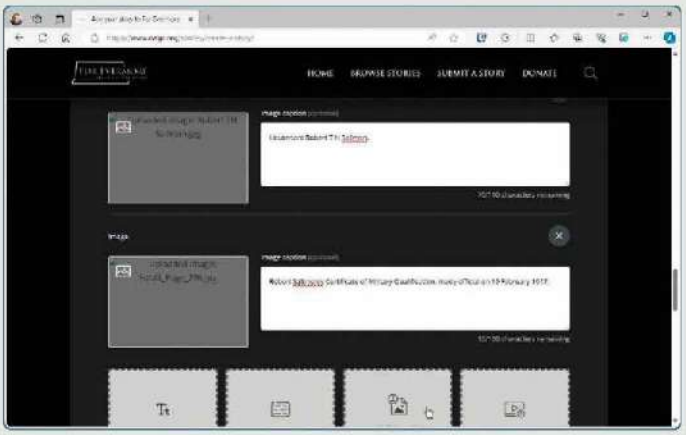
2 Locate Your Ancestor Visit **cwgc.org**, type the name of the relation you wish to feature into the 'Search our records…' box and click 'Search'. Use the information provided in the results to locate their entry, then click the 'More Details' button to visit their personal web page. Select the web link and copy it to your clipboard.



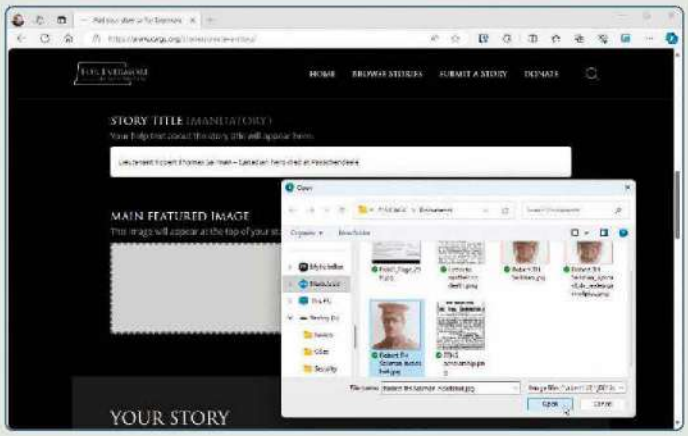
3 Set Up Your Story Now click the 'For Evermore' link at the top of the page or go to **cwgc.org/stories** and click the 'Submit a story' link. Scroll down to the story introduction section and paste the copied link into the 'Casualty detail URL from CWGC' field. After a short pause, their name should appear to its left.



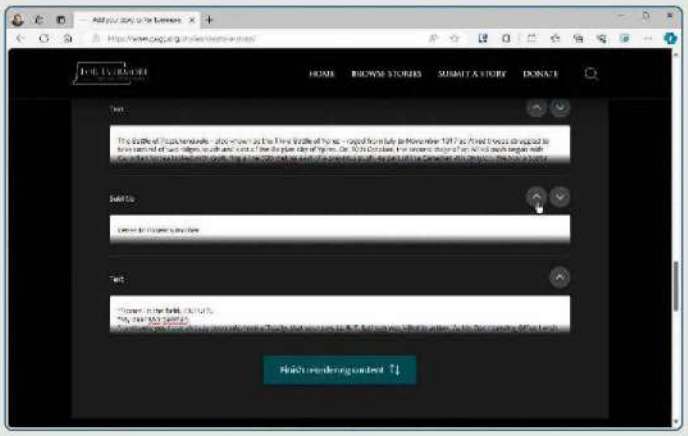
4 **Fill In Basic Details** Click each of the dropdown menu items beneath this to select which war they fought in, their role (which branch of the military, or whether they were a civilian or 'miscellaneous'), their nationality and to pick a theme if applicable – this is optional, because there's an extremely limited choice.



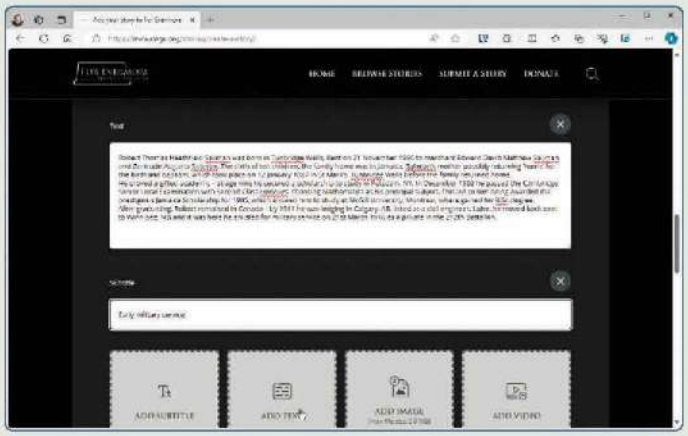
7 **Add Images And Videos** You'll also see options to add images (remember the maximum file size), as well as videos. When inserting images, you'll be prompted to supply a caption. Note that videos can't be uploaded, so you'll need to provide links to ones that you've hosted on YouTube (**youtube.com**) or Vimeo (**vimeo.com**).



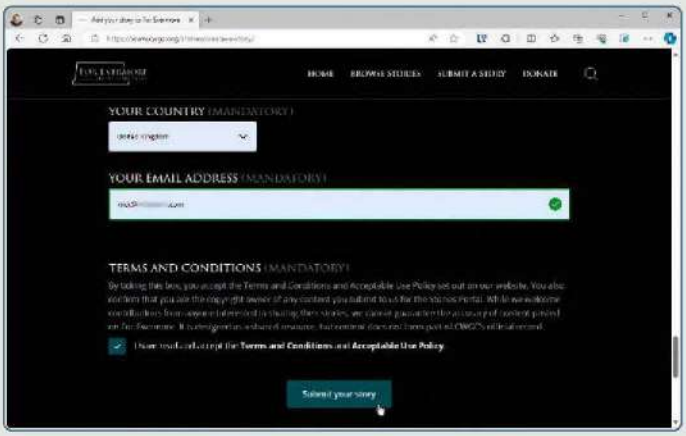
5 **Add Title And Main Image** Enter your story title into the relevant field – try to include rank, name, service number and regiment/unit/squadron/ship. Click 'Choose Image' beneath this to upload the main image that will be displayed above the story in landscape orientation – typically a photograph of your forebear.



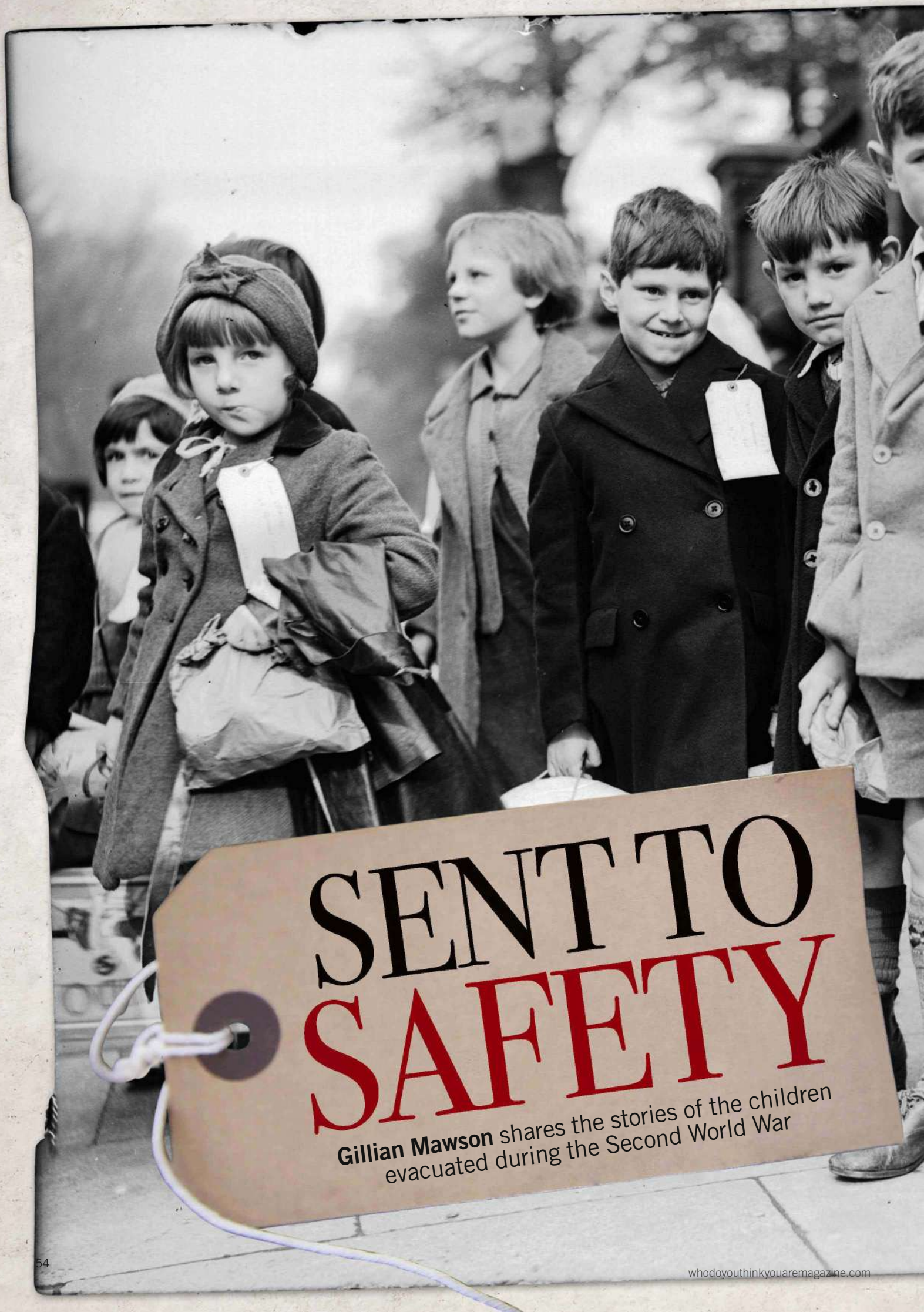
8 **Rearrange Your Content** Once all your content is uploaded, you may want to place images within the text at relevant points to break it up. Click the 'Reorder content' button at the bottom of the 'Your Story' panel, then use the ^ and ˅ buttons to move individual blocks up and down. Click 'Finish reordering content' when done.



6 **Tell Your Story** Put your story together by adding content blocks: start by clicking 'Add Text' to add your first text block. Rather than subject your readers to endless text, make it more readable by breaking it into sections, clicking 'Add Subtitle' to add a subheading. Repeat the process until all of your text has been added.



9 **Submit Your Story** Finally, supply your name, country and email address. Read the terms and conditions, then tick the box before clicking 'Submit your story'. You'll be told that the story is with the CWGC moderators for review. You should allow up to 10 working days for it to appear, but in many cases it'll only take hours.



SENT TO SAFETY

Gillian Mawson shares the stories of the children evacuated during the Second World War

GETTY IMAGES

Many evacuated children did not even own suitcases or rucksacks to carry their possessions

On 1 September 1939 the British government's plans for evacuation swung into operation. About 1.5 million children aged 4–14 were moved from towns and cities that were thought to be at risk of bombing, before war was declared on 3 September. In addition, thousands of pregnant women, mothers with infants and teachers travelled with the children. Most evacuees were taken to billets in the British countryside, or on the south and east coasts. Although most evacuees were transported by train, thousands travelled by boat. Children from Portsmouth were taken to the Isle of Wight, while hundreds of Dagenham evacuees boarded paddle steamers that were bound for Yarmouth.

Prior to 1 September, each evacuee was given an Evacuation Notice that explained what they should take (see the image on page 57). The first items listed were a gas mask, identity card and ration book. Each child was told to carry enough food to last one day – egg or cheese sandwiches; packets of nuts or raisins; biscuits with little packets of cheese; barley sugar rather than chocolate; and an apple or an orange. Clothing requirements included a spare set of underwear; night clothes; handkerchiefs; spare stockings or socks; house shoes or plimsolls; and a warm coat or mackintosh.

'Never Even Seen An Orange'

This proved problematic for many of the children, as one former evacuee Joan Watson remembered. "When my mum saw the evacuation list, she realised that I didn't own a spare pair of shoes, a spare set of underclothes or a warm coat! I know that she was embarrassed about this, but what could she do? Most of my school friends didn't own such things either." Jean Barrington recalled, "The list seemed very funny to me as we were very poor. For a start, I had never even seen an orange! Also the list said that we should use a rucksack for the journey. We couldn't afford one, so Mum put my few belongings in a spare pillowcase."

Evacuees catch a train at Paddington Station shortly after the war began

When the evacuees arrived in the evacuee reception areas, volunteers were waiting there to greet them. The children, teachers and mothers were given hot tea and sandwiches, then local families arrived and the 'selection process' began. Harry Flack revealed, "We were all lined up and chosen by the people who were going to take us into their homes. The girls went first, followed by the larger boys who, dare I say, could be useful."

Evacuated mothers often fared badly during this selection process. People were reluctant to take a mother with young children into their homes, so Margaret Jones from Liverpool was given a substandard house in Ashton, Lancashire. "There was so much damp on the walls that when I put my hand on them it came away wet. I knew it would make me and my baby very ill. There was no furniture except a chair and a rickety single bed. The roof leaked and I had no coal to light a fire with. That night I cried my heart out, feeling so far away from my husband and home."

My interviews with hundreds of child evacuees show that their experiences varied greatly. Many had positive experiences and formed loving relationships with their wartime foster families. When Rita Roberts was evacuated from Birmingham to Bromsgrove, her foster parents bought her new clothes and toys. "They also took me to Aberystwyth in Wales to see the sea, which I'd never done before. All I could say was, 'Ooh, look! All that water!'"

Many formed loving relationships with their wartime foster families

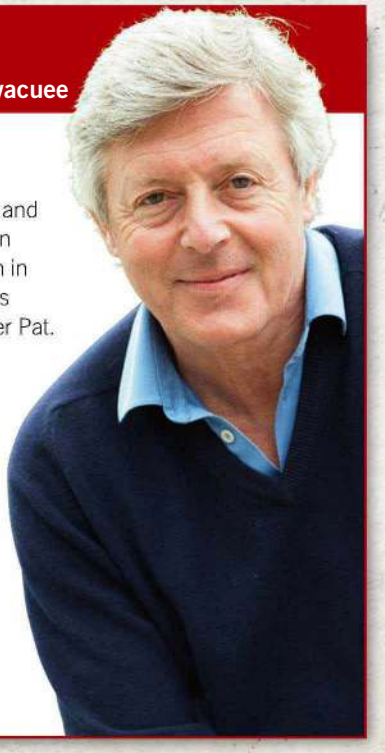
Their new environment, however, was often unfamiliar to the children who encountered differences in housing, dress, food, language, dialect and religion. Audrey Patterson was placed with a family in Bideford, Devon. "My sister Gwen and I were lucky to be placed with Mr and Mrs Shute who were very kind to us. However, she used to make something called 'junket', a white sloppy substance sprinkled with nutmeg which I hated." June Somekh was from an Orthodox Jewish family, and was evacuated from Manchester to Derbyshire with her brother. "He was billeted with the local pork butcher! Had my parents known about this, I don't think we would have been allowed to stay the course!" When Bob Cooper arrived at his billet in Cornwall, he was extremely shocked to discover that his new home had no gas, electricity or running water. "We collected water from a well and used a bucket for a toilet. It was normal to them but very strange to me. They looked after us very well though and we called them Aunty and Uncle."

Harsh Treatment

On the other hand, some children were ill-treated by those who took them in. John Mathews was badly underfed, and after school each

Michael Aspel

The former TV presenter and newsreader was a child evacuee



Michael Aspel OBE was a familiar face on our TV screens for decades presenting such programmes as *This Is Your Life* and *Antiques Roadshow*. However, he was also a wartime evacuee and is a patron of The British Evacuees Association (formerly known as The Evacuees Reunion Association; **evacuees.org.uk**). Born in Battersea, South-West London, on 12 January 1933, Aspel was evacuated to Chard in Somerset with his brother Alan and sister Pat. Unfortunately, he was immediately separated from his siblings and billeted with a middle-aged couple, Rose and George Larcombe. Aspel remembered his first evening with Rose very well as, despite her kindness, he was desperately unhappy to have been separated from his family. "Eventually the thoughts became too much to bear and I said, 'I want my mum.' Rose went to a cupboard and after a few minutes' rummaging brought out an air rifle which belonged to her son Leonard who was a soldier.

"It was an interesting exchange. Small boy wants his mother; he gets a gun. Wise Aunt Rose. It had been a long time since her son was a child but she still knew that the only solution to some emotional problems was a material one."

GETTY IMAGES

The party number is Southend 46

Notice to Parents of Children Registered for Evacuation

READ THIS CAREFULLY — IT IS IMPORTANT.

1. The children will be taken to areas which the Government believe to be safer than the evacuating areas. Whilst no part of the country can be said to be absolutely safe, the children will have a better chance outside the towns. It is not possible to move all the children to places where they are unlikely to see anything of the war. The numbers to be moved are far too large for this, but the Government think that all the places to which children will be sent will be safer than the towns from which they will come.

2. The children will be accompanied by teachers. When they have been billeted, children will send to their parents the stamped postcard which they should take with them, giving their exact address.

3. HEALTH AND CLEANLINESS. First impressions are important, and it is essential that the people with whom our children are to be billeted should be impressed by their cleanliness. You should therefore do everything possible to ensure that your child goes away with clean clothes, clean hair and a clean body. Every Mother will wish her child to arrive at his new home in a state in which he will be welcomed.

All children will be carefully examined by the School Nurses and any instructions which are given regarding the children should be carefully carried out. If your child has sores of any kind or there is anything in connection with your child's health which you think she ought to know, don't hesitate to tell the Nurse. She is only too anxious to help you.

4. CLOTHING. The Heads of the Schools will have given you a list of clothing which it is desirable that your child should take. The following are the principal items which are given for your guidance:—

Gas Mask
Identity Card.
Ration Book.
Food for the day.
Change of underclothing.
Night clothes.
Handkerchiefs.
Spare stockings or socks.
House shoes or plimsolls.
Warm coat or mackintosh.
Toothbrush.
Comb.
Towel.

The child should wear the overcoat or mackintosh and his thickest boots or shoes, and should be warmly clothed.

The luggage must not be more than the child can carry. Other clothes needed can be sent on later.

You will be responsible for renewing the child's clothing whilst away.

Gas masks should be slung over the shoulder and not carried in the luggage.

5. FOOD. As it may take some hours to reach the destination, every child must be given sufficient food for the day. The following items would make a good meal:—

Sandwiches (egg or cheese).
Packets of nuts or seedless raisins.
Dry biscuits (with little packets of cheese).
Barley sugar (rather than chocolate).
Apple; orange.

Liquids should not be carried by children.

6. LUGGAGE. The most suitable luggage carrier both for the journey and for use away is the rucksack. This is strapped on the back and leaves the arms free. If a rucksack is too expensive a haversack would be cheaper and is a good substitute.

All property belonging to a child should be marked with the child's name.

If you have not a haversack or small suitcase for your child, a pillow case makes a better carrier than a parcel. *Do not load up your child with parcels.*

7. LABELS. Two labels will be supplied by the school for your child. One should be affixed to his luggage, and the other, in the case of a girl, tied round her neck; and for a boy, fixed to the lapel of his jacket.

8. RATION BOOKS. Be sure that your child has his ration book with him. If pages of coupons out of his book have been deposited with retailers, ask for their return and pin the pages in the ration book.

Both the ration book and the identity card should be securely packed in the child's luggage and not given him to hold.

9. MEDICAL AND DENTAL TREATMENT. Unless I hear from you to the contrary it will be assumed that you give your consent to a doctor's or dentist's advice being carried out when your child is away from home.

10. It is realised that you will be anxious about your child, but I can assure you that as far as it is in the power of the Teachers, every care will be taken to look after him or her.

H. BOYES WATSON.
Chief Education Officer.

An example of an Evacuation Notice with instructions for the child's parents

day his billeters locked him in his bedroom with no toys or books. Sharing his story in the *Telegraph* in September 2009, John stated, "It was obvious that my letters home were going to be censored, so in the first one I wrote the sort of thing one should – 'Having a wonderful time, wish you were here.' The following morning I somehow managed to steal an envelope and stamp and wrote a rather more truthful letter home. The gist of it was that if something didn't happen quickly, I was going to run away. Two Saturdays later my mother turned up at the door to collect me." Rosemary Hall and her brother also endured harsh treatment from the woman who took them in: "We slept on camp beds in a hallway and we were constantly hungry. After four months our mum tracked us down. She saw the state of us and immediately removed us from the premises."

On 8 May 1945, the war in Europe was finally over and the evacuees began to return home. However, for some the five years of separation had dire consequences, not least John Helyer: "When I was reunited with my mum and dad, I didn't understand them and they didn't understand me. We just couldn't get on." For others, the bonds forged with their foster families endured. Sheila Gibson explained, "I wrote to Mr and Mrs Croft in Derby regularly and I visited them every year until they passed away. I will never forget them."

GILLIAN MAWSON is a historian and author who has made a particular study of Second World War evacuation

GETTY IMAGES

RESOURCES
Take your research further

BOOKS

Britain's Wartime Evacuees
Gillian Mawson
Frontline, 2016
Gillian's book contains testimony from hundreds of evacuees from England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar. It also has diary entries, documents and wartime newspaper reports.

Send Them to Safety
James Roffey
The Evacuees Reunion Association, 2009
Written by the founder of The British Evacuees Association, this title contains stories from evacuees, plus more than 1,000 names of evacuees and where they were sent from and to.

MUSEUM

SECOND WORLD WAR EXPERIENCE CENTRE
a **2 Cross Green, Otley, West Yorkshire LS21 1HD**
t 01943 466431
e *enquiries@war-experience.org*
w **war-experience.org/collections/civilians-war**
The centre's biographies, photos and other material illustrate the impact of the war on civilians, including children. Visitors are welcome by appointment.

WEBSITES

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM
w **iwm.org.uk/collections**
Searching IWM's catalogue for the word 'evacuee' brings up numerous fascinating items.

THE BRITISH EVACUEES ASSOCIATION
w **evacuees.org.uk**
If you or your relation was an evacuee, this is a very valuable resource. The Facebook group is at **tinyurl.com/fb-gp-tbea**.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
w **tinyurl.com/tna-guide-evac**
TNA's website has an essential guide to researching evacuees.

‘A Westminster Record Solved The Mystery’

CELEBRATING YOUR DISCOVERIES

Jeremy Baker was keen to find the identity of his great great grandmother, whose husband helped to build an iconic London landmark. He struck lucky when he found a marriage record from 1836, says **Gail Dixon**

Casting the net wide with your research can smash down the most frustrating brick walls. Record sets vary between the online ‘genealogical giants’, so it’s a good idea to try out a new website or subscription from time to time. Jeremy Baker explains how this approach helped him to track down an elusive ancestor.

My Brick Wall

My father Norman Herbert Baker was born in 1907, and he passed on anecdotes about family members who lived during the 19th century. He told me that my great great grandfather John Baker lived in Kennington, South London, in a house overlooking the Oval cricket ground. John and his wife Susannah had a large family, and many of them would visit to watch the cricket together.

John was a stonemason and Father told me that he worked on the Victoria Tower at the Palace of Westminster. This landmark was designed in the Perpendicular Gothic style and was designed to house parliamentary records. On completion in 1860, it was the tallest square stone tower in the world, with a height of 325 feet. At its base is the Sovereign’s Entrance which was used by Queen Victoria and successive monarchs, including Charles III.

JEREMY BAKER is a retired lawyer who lives in Dulwich, South London. He has been researching his family history for 60 years

Early research taught me that John was born in 1809 at Coldharbour near Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire, and baptised at the nearby village of Little Gaddesden. His parents were William Baker, a stonemason, and his wife Ann.

Intriguingly, the burial register for Berkhamsted lists the death of a William Baker “of Lambeth” who died in 1815. I assumed that he had come from Lambeth in South London, which left the difficult task of finding one of many William Bakers in the city.

John married a Susannah Elizabeth Wilkins in around 1836, but I wasn’t able to locate either her baptism record or their marriage on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**). I had hit a brick wall.

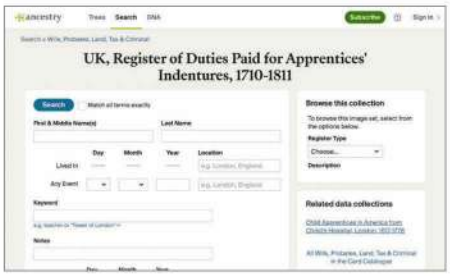
My Eureka Moment

Susannah persistently used her second name Elizabeth on official records, and this was important because there were only two women of those names who married in around 1836. I ruled out one who clearly married someone else and this left Susannah Elizabeth Wilkins, the daughter of William Wilkins, a stonemason who lived in Millbank, Westminster.

A major breakthrough came when I found Susannah’s baptism record in Westminster Archives (at that time Ancestry did not have Westminster parish records). She was baptised on 15 February 1817 at St Margaret’s Church, on Parliament Square.

Researching Stonemason Ancestors

If your forebear was a stonemason, these resources can help you build a picture of their lives



Ancestry

w **ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/1851**

Search the collection ‘UK, Register of Duties Paid for Apprentices’ Indentures, 1710–1811’ for names of masters and trainees. For more on apprenticeship records, see page 38.

London Metropolitan Archives

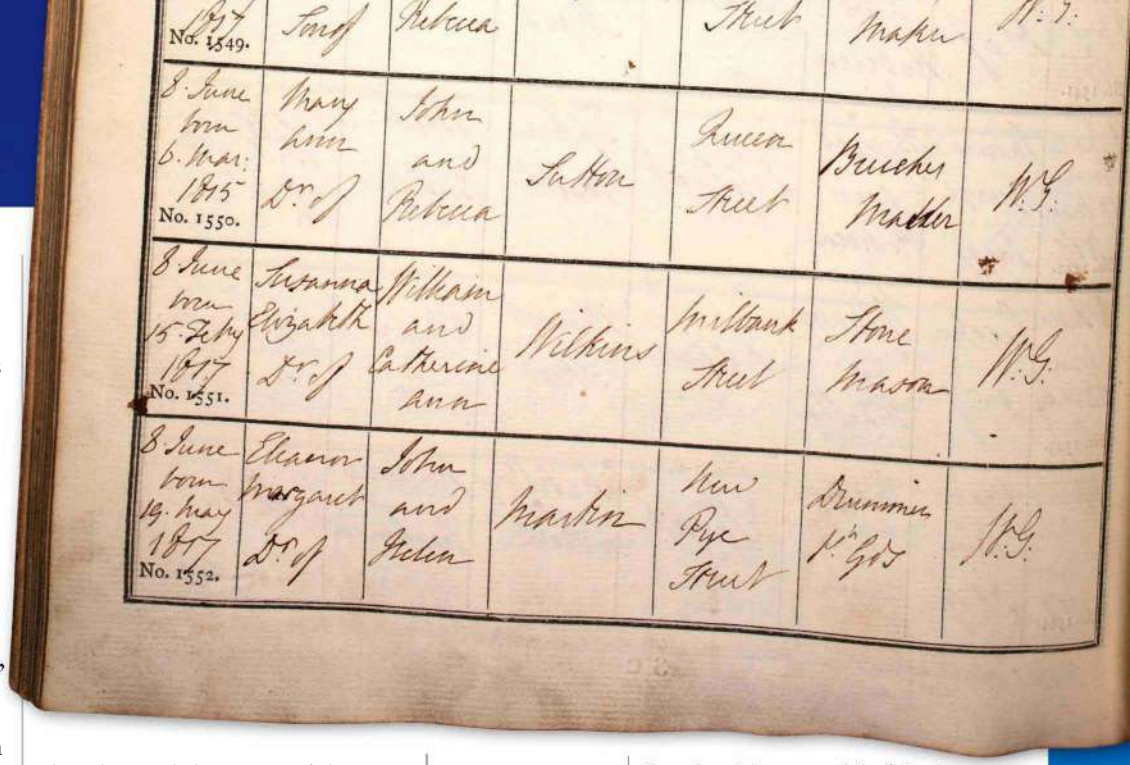
w **search.lma.gov.uk**

LMA holds material from the livery company the Worshipful Company of Masons (and a wharf indenture that revealed the name of Jeremy’s ancestor’s business partner).

Special Collections Online

w **tinyurl.com/sco-directories**

Your relation’s company may have been listed in trade directories. You can search 689 directories, from the 1760s to the 1910s, on this University of Leicester website.



The trouble was that in all the census returns Susannah gave her birthplace as Berkhamsted, and an entry in my Great Aunt Mary's birthday book gave her birthday as 28 October. I puzzled over this for some time, but the solution proved to be simple.

In 2022, I found John and Susannah's marriage online (the Westminster records that were on Findmypast are now on Ancestry, making their London collection more complete). Like the baptism, the marriage also took place at St Margaret's Church, Westminster. This was clearly the parish church of the Wilkins family.

Great Aunt Mary must have made a mistake in her birthday book, and, looking again at the Wilkins family, I saw that one of Susannah's brothers was born in Berkhamsted and another married a woman from there. Finally, my brick wall had tumbled down.

My Breakthrough

I discovered via the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA; **cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/london-metropolitan-archives**) that John and his business partner Richard Wardle took on a lease in 1853 of what was then known as Johnson's Wharf on Millbank. The pair employed 22 men and obtained a licence for piling in the Thames, which involved making heavy supports for the foundations of different superstructures. They also changed the name of the premises to New Palace Wharf.

I've no doubt that they were importing stone for use in the building of the Victoria Tower. The partnership was dissolved in 1871, at which point John may have retired.

I have a photograph of my grandfather John Herbert Baker with his wife Florence Bartholomew and my father as a boy, which must have been taken in the 1910s. They are sitting in a car that Grandfather made outside his house in Grove Lane, Camberwell, South London, where they had a smallholding.

There is also a strange statue in the garden, which my father said was a reject from the Victoria Tower contract. I showed this image to a speaker about parliamentary buildings at the annual general meeting of the London Topographical Society (**londontopsoc.org**), who confirmed that the statue was probably a reject from the works.

I'm now trying to discover a baptism record for John's father William Baker "of Lambeth", who presumably moved from London to Berkhamsted.

My guess is that he went to work on Ashridge House, near Little Gaddesden and Coldharbour, which was being constructed at the time.

John may have moved to Lambeth to find work after William died. There was clearly a community of stonemasons beside the Thames close to the Houses of Parliament, which is where his bride-to-be Susannah grew up. It has been very pleasing to solve the mystery of her identity.

Susannah Wilkins was baptised on 15 February 1817

HAVE YOU BROKEN THROUGH A BRICK WALL?

Share your family story with us and you could appear in the magazine!

Please write to us at the address on page 6 or email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

John and Florence Baker with Jeremy's father – note the statue in the garden

Reader Tips

Jeremy recommends these strategies if you're stuck

- Never expect one genealogy website to have all of the answers that you need.
- LMA holds the Middlesex Deeds Registry documents, which can be useful if you're looking for an ancestor's premises.
- Prepare thoroughly before visiting an archive. Check the opening times, which can be restrictive, and order documents in advance to avoid having to wait.

A Charity's Heritage

Rosemary Collins uncovers a project to transcribe historic visitors' books from a property in Warwick

Master of The Lord Leycester Heidi Meyer *(far left)* examines the visitors' books with four of the project's volunteers

The Lord Leycester in Warwick (**lordleycester.com**) is a fantastic example of medieval courtyard architecture. It started life as a chapel in 1123, but additional buildings were constructed by the United Guild of Warwick between 1385 and 1430 to govern the town, house travellers, and provide support to the deserving poor. In the Elizabethan era the buildings were taken over by Robert Dudley, 1st Earl of Leicester, to house a 'hospital' providing accommodation for veterans, a tradition that continues to this day.

The Lord Leycester and its garden have attracted countless visitors over the years. In October 2021 staff approached the Arts Society Royal Leamington Spa (**theartssociety.org/royal-leamington-spa**) to ask if society volunteers would help with a project to transcribe the visitors' books, which date from 1884–1925. An earlier survey of the books had taken place with the aim of recording all of the visitors from abroad, but nothing had been done with the data and it was decided to widen the scope to take account of all visitors.

"Master of The Lord Leycester Heidi Meyer met with a group of six volunteers, and a working space was allocated there," says Ruth Barton, one of the volunteers. "Each person selected a book and began transcribing. However, it soon became obvious that it was a huge project that would require more people and many hours' work. More volunteers were recruited, and at this point it was decided that the books could be entrusted to their safekeeping in order for them to work at home."

"The visitors' books vary slightly, but most have a date entry followed by name and place of residence," she explains. "The task of the volunteers was to record this information. It was not that straightforward! Anyone who thinks that people in the past had immaculate handwriting is sadly mistaken. It was extremely difficult to decipher some of the names, although working in pairs helped with second opinion.

"Work on the books has continued for two years, and we are at various stages of completion. During this time The Lord Leycester has been undergoing major renovation, and we lost our workspace and meeting venue. We were able to use another local venue for our meetings, but it was not the same. Thankfully as the renovation is now completed we are back working at The Lord Leycester."

Work has continued for two years, and we are at various stages of completion

The project has uncovered many famous people who visited The Lord Leycester, including George V (then the Prince of Wales) and writers such as Oscar Wilde, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry James. In more recent times, it has been visited by actors including Colin Firth (while filming the 1995 BBC adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*) and David Tennant (while filming *Doctor Who* in 2006).

Georgia Wilkes, its programmes and participation manager, reveals, "The end goal of this project is for all of the volunteers' transcription and research work to be inputted into a database that is accessible on site at The Lord Leycester. The volunteers' work feeds directly into an exhibition on site where visitors are already able to look through a preliminary database of visitors' names, and in some instances read short biographies. People have enjoyed consulting the database. It has proved to be an interesting research tool for those looking into their family history. It also works well for the general public, who get a glimpse into history through the eyes of past individuals."

Get Involved

The Lord Leycester
a 60 High Street, Warwick CV34 4BH
t 01926 491422
e *info@lordleycester.com*
w **lordleycester.com/opening-times**

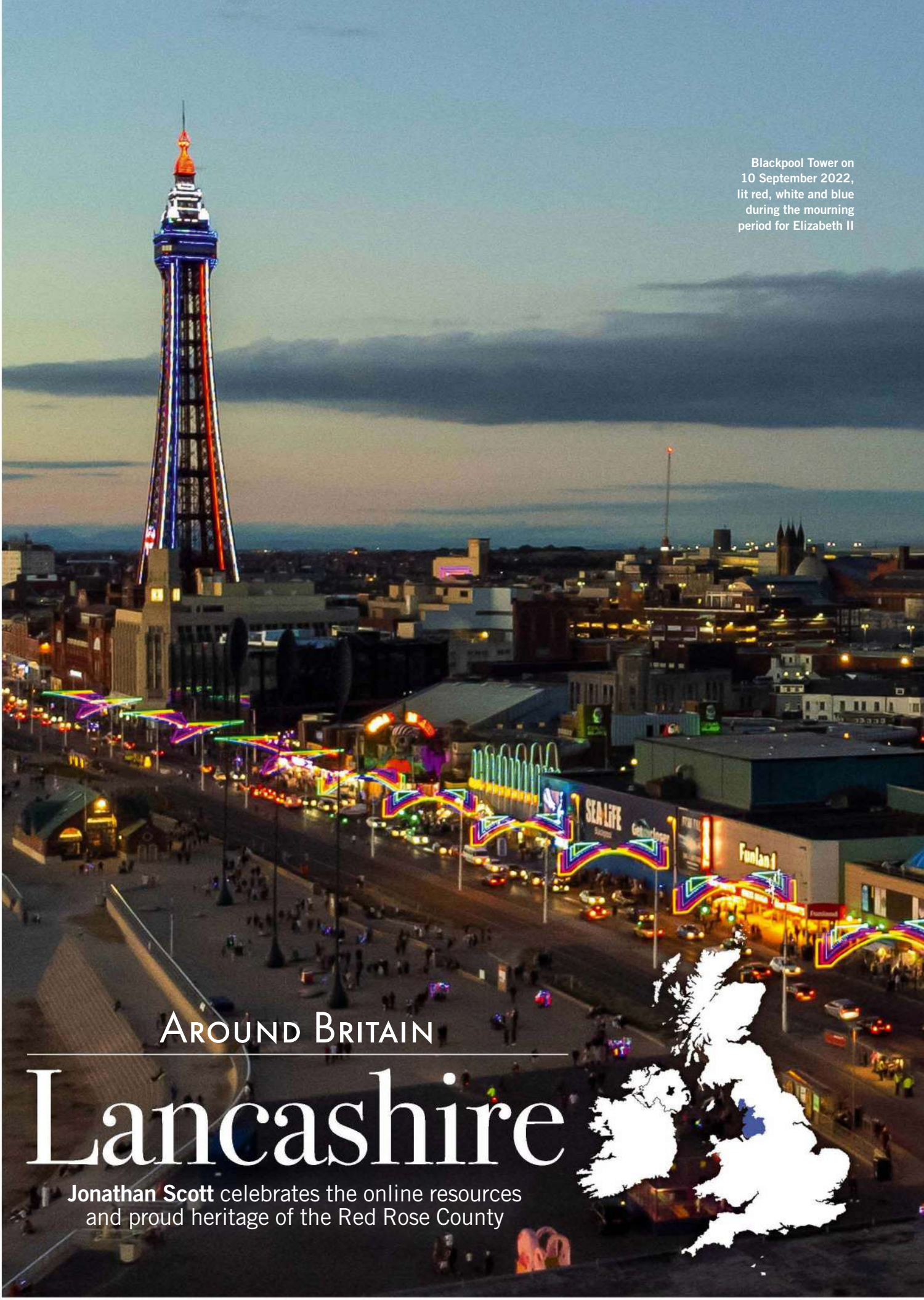
Family historians are welcome to search the database of visitors at The Lord Leycester, while members of the Arts Society Royal Leamington Spa can help the project by emailing *volunteers@tasrls.org.uk*.

TELL YOUR STORY

Share your local history project with us and you could appear in the magazine!

Please write to us at the address on page 6 or email *rosemary.collins@ourmedia.co.uk*

KEITH ROBERTS



Blackpool Tower on 10 September 2022, lit red, white and blue during the mourning period for Elizabeth II

GETTY IMAGES

Around Britain

Lancashire

Jonathan Scott celebrates the online resources and proud heritage of the Red Rose County

Preston, c1900

Lancashire has a rich footballing heritage. It was the stamping-ground of pioneering footballer Lily Parr, who was born in St Helens in 1905 and played for Dick, Kerr Ladies Football Club, a works team that played charity matches in Preston during the First World War. And of the 12 clubs that founded the Football League in 1888, half were from within the county's historic boundaries – Accrington, Blackburn Rovers, Bolton Wanderers, Burnley, Everton and Preston North End.

Clarets Collected, a new project from Lancashire Archives & Local History (**lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/archives-and-record-office/clarets-collected/**), is bringing together a fan-led archive of material relating to Burnley FC. The Clarets are one of just three teams to have been champions in all four divisions, they won the FA Cup in 1913/1914, and in the 1986/1987 season almost dropped out of the league altogether, saved by a 2–1 win over Orient on the final day. The majority of this new archive arrived at Burnley Library in April last year and includes match programmes, fanzines and photographs.

Another key resource for football records is the archive of the National Football Museum. Although the museum itself is in Manchester, its collections are housed in the research centre at Preston's Deepdale Stadium (**nationalfootballmuseum.com/research-centre**). This is home to both the official Preston North End Collection and the Football League Collection, which features transfer lists, attendance records and registration books. The books record a player's name, date of registration and games played for all Football League clubs.

Preston had a trading organisation whose members enjoyed a monopoly

Going much further back, Lancashire Archives holds records of another exclusive club – the Preston Guild. When Henry II granted a first charter in 1179, it gave Preston the right to have a Guild Merchant – a trading organisation whose members enjoyed a monopoly over the town. If anyone wished to carry out a trade, craft or business in Preston, they had to become a member. It became custom for special guild celebrations to be held once in a generation, when members no longer living in Preston would return for social events, feasts and entertainments. These celebrations, known simply as 'Guilds', continue to the present day – the last was held in 2012, and the next is scheduled to take place in 2032. The earliest extant guild roll dates from 1397, there are examples from 1415 and 1459, and from 1542 the series of records is complete.

The county is perhaps most

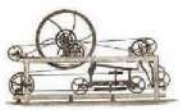
Lancashire Through The Ages

Historical highlights from the region

1612
After being convicted of murder by witchcraft in the area surrounding Pendle Hill, eight women and two men are hanged in August.

c1764
James Hargreaves becomes the first of three Lancashire-born inventors to help spark the Industrial Revolution with his creation the spinning jenny.

1769
Preston-born Richard Arkwright patents the water frame, capable of spinning 96 threads at the same time. He will become known as the father of the industrial factory system.



1779
Samuel Crompton of Bolton invents the spinning mule, enabling a single operator to work hundreds of spindles simultaneously.

1821
John Edward Taylor, a liberal cotton merchant who witnessed the Peterloo Massacre in 1819, founds the *Manchester Guardian*.

1839
A Grand Liverpool Steeplechase at Aintree is won by a horse named Lottery at 9/1. The race is later known as the Grand National.

GETTY IMAGES

famous for cotton, and the pivotal role it played in the Industrial Revolution. James Hargreaves' spinning jenny, Richard Arkwright's water frame and Samuel Crompton's spinning mule between them revolutionised the industry. Indeed Arkwright, often described as the father of the factory system, also went on to open the world's first steam-driven textile mill in Manchester.

Records Of Textile Firms

Today, the heritage of this global industry can be seen dotted all over the landscape, from faded ruins to working museums. Lancashire Archives holds records from many textile businesses, while the University of Manchester looks after the archive of Rylands & Sons (**tinyurl.com/uni-manc-lib-rylands**), a hugely successful cotton firm founded in 1819, which includes various types of employment records.

Lancashire's archives and resource manager Alex Miller says, "We also hold huge collections of records for the National Coal Board, covering Lancashire and modern-day Merseyside and Greater Manchester. The records contain vast amounts of information about the vital role of the industry in the economy of the north-west and in the lives of people across the region, with documents including employee records as well as operational records."

He adds that the county's maritime records are sometimes overlooked and yet they tell the story of another enormously important industry that powered the ports of Lancaster and Preston, as well as shipbuilding and fishing in Fleetwood.

The county archive also holds probate material; trade directories; newspapers; cemetery registers from Preston, Blackburn and Lancaster; as well as estate records and solicitors' collections, which include deeds, leases, registers, sales particulars and rentals. The quarter-sessions collection includes land-tax records (1781–1832), which list all those paying taxes in a particular township, together ▶

Free Online Records

This month's selection includes nonconformist records, details of militia officers, maps, civil indexes, parish registers and an excellent Online Parish Clerks project

Militia Records

w **tinyurl.com/hath-lancs**

The digital library HathiTrust includes a volume listing officers of the Old County Regiment of Lancashire Militia late 1st Royal Lancashire (the Duke of Lancaster's Own) from 1642–1889.

Historic Maps

w **tinyurl.com/lancs-mario**

Lancashire County Council's portal MARIO (Maps & Related Information Online) includes both modern and historic maps, plus aerial photographs.

Nonconformist Records

w **tinyurl.com/fs-lancs-noncon**

The holdings for Lancashire on FamilySearch include an indexed collection of nonconformist church records with images, from such denominations as Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, the Society of Friends, and Wesleyan.

Civil Indexes

w **lancashirebmd.org.uk**

Lancashire BMD provides local indexes to civil records of births, marriages and deaths.

Parish Registers

w **freereg.org.uk**

FreeREG is particularly strong here with more than 4.5 million entries for the county.

Parish Clerks Indexes

w **lan-opc.org.uk**

This thriving Online Parish Clerks project provides indexes to marriages, baptisms and burials for historic Lancashire.

1852

The 128 feet tall Peel Monument, erected in memory of Bury-born prime minister Robert Peel, is officially opened at Ramsbottom.

GETTY IMAGES

1867

Amateur scientist Lydia Ernestine Becker convenes the first meeting of the pioneering Manchester Women's Suffrage Committee.

1905

Footballer Lily Parr is born in St Helens. She plays for Dick, Kerr Ladies Football Club, founded in Preston in 1917 as a works team for locomotive and tramcar manufacturer Dick, Kerr & Co.

1954

Wavertree-born actor Leonard Rossiter makes his professional stage debut at Preston's Royal Hippodrome.

1981

Rioting breaks out in Toxteth, inner-city Liverpool, following economic decline, high unemployment, and tensions between the local community and the Merseyside Police.

London Midland & Scottish Railway poster promoting travel to Morecambe and Heysham

with petitions from individuals asking the authorities for help.

Happily, lots of parish material is already available online. There's an array of free resources, such as transcriptions via Lancashire Online Parish Clerks (**lan-opc.org.uk**) and FreeREG (**freereg.org.uk**). In addition, Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) has millions of records from Liverpool and Manchester, while the material on Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**) includes Catholic registers for Liverpool and Salford. Alex also reports that staff have been working with Ancestry to digitise collections of Catholic and Methodist church registers, which are due to be online this year.

TOP TIP!

As the diocesan record office, Lancashire Archives is home to church court records, marriage bonds and probate material covering the 'old' (pre-1974) county up until 1858.

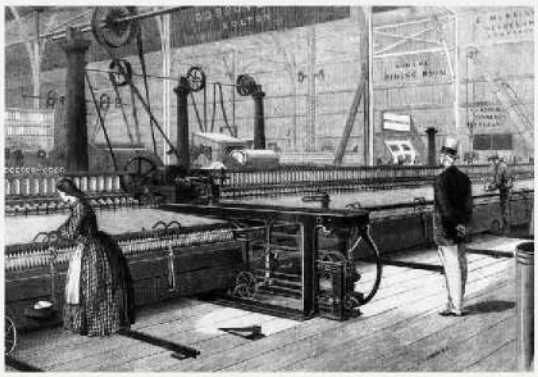
Digitising Old Photos

The archive is also leading 'Keeping East Lancashire in the Picture', a two-year project that will transform access to historic photos that are preserved in Lancashire's libraries. With a budget of £222,000, of which £192,000 is provided by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the project will see volunteers from schools and community groups across Burnley, Pendle and Hyndburn, as well as individuals, digitise 100,000 images that will eventually be made available through the county council's online archive Red Rose Collections (**redrosecollections.lancashire.gov.uk**). There are 75 opportunities for digitisation and research volunteers across four project hubs in Accrington, Burnley, Colne and Nelson. If you would like to get involved, please email *archives@lancashire.gov.uk*.

Finally Showtown, Blackpool's new "museum of fun and entertainment" (**showtownblackpool.co.uk**), will open on 15 March, with six themed galleries. Meanwhile the town's archives, local-history resources and heritage collections are held by the Showtown History Centre, located at Blackpool Central Library, which remains closed for renovation.

LOCAL INDUSTRY

Textiles Was your relation employed in this hugely successful industry?



A spinning mule manufactured by Platt Brothers of Oldham

More than four million people lived in Lancashire at the dawn of the 20th century – and of those, over half a million were employed in textiles. So it's no wonder that the industry makes a major contribution to the material held by the county archive. For example, a collection relating to Horrockses, Crewdson & Co, which transformed Preston, can be searched via the online catalogue at **tinyurl.com/lancs-arch-cat-horrockses**. And you can read more about the legacy of Lancashire's textile mills in a free booklet available on Historic England's site: **tinyurl.com/he-lcs-booklet**.

Lancashire Surnames

Are any of these in your family tree?

ASPDEN

This locative name comes from the historic name of a valley near Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire, which is now known as Aspen.

EASTHAM

Although from a place in Cheshire, this habitational name is more commonly found in Lancashire.

ENTWISTLE

Some 5,214 Entwistles were recorded in Lancashire in the 1881 census, along with a further 279 Entwhistles/Entwisles.

FARNWORTH

This surname comes from two places in Lancashire called Farnworth. Farnsworth is a less common variant.

GREENHALGH

This Old English name refers to a green hollow.

HAWORTH

Of the several thousand Haworths recorded in 1881, 1,266 were living in Blackburn, 564 in Accrington and 456 in Haslingden.

SHORROCK

There are numerous variants of this name in Lancashire. Note that the similar-sounding surname Horrocks comes from what is now part of Greater Manchester.

THRELFALL

The habitational name Threlfall derives from the Old Norse word *thræll*, and describes a location where trees have been felled.

GETTY IMAGES

DIRECTORY

ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

Lancashire Archives & Local History
a **Bow Lane, Preston PR1 2RE**
t 01772 533039
e *archives@lancashire.gov.uk*
w **lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/archives-and-record-office**
The county archive's website has a research guide about its holdings of Anglican, Catholic and nonconformist church registers. There is also a link to companion site Red Rose Collections, which includes 30,000 historic photos, plus indexes to Whittingham Asylum patients and Lancashire Constabulary officers: **redrosecollections.lancashire.gov.uk**.

Barrow Archive Centre
a **Barrow Library, Ramsden Square, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA14 1LL**
t 01229 407377
e *barrow.archives@cumberland.gov.uk*
w **tinyurl.com/barr-arch**
The centre covers parts of Furness and south-west Cumberland once in Lancashire.

John Rylands Research Institute And Library
a **150 Deansgate, Manchester M3 3EH**
t 0161 275 3764
e *uml.special-collections@manchester.ac.uk*
w **www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands/**
The library houses most of the special collections held by the University of Manchester Library.

Liverpool Record Office
a **3rd Floor, Central Library, William Brown Street, Liverpool L3 8EW**
t 0151 233 5817
w **tinyurl.com/liver-rec**
LRO's Digital Archive Collection provides access to oral histories, podcasts and photos: **liverpool.access.preservica.com**.

Manchester Archives
a **Ground Floor, Central Library, St Peter's Square, City Centre, Manchester M2 5PD**
t 0161 234 1979
e *archiveslocalstudies@manchester.gov.uk*
w **tinyurl.com/manc-ar**
The archive's website includes a guide to church registers.

National Football Museum Research Centre
a **Deepdale Stadium, Sir Tom Finney Way, Preston PR1 6RU**
t 0161 605 8200
e *collections@nationalfootballmuseum.com*
w **tinyurl.com/foot-rc**
The centre is open on Tuesdays.

Showtown History Centre
a **First Floor, Blackpool Central Library, Queen Street, Blackpool FY1 1PX**
t 01253 478090
e *historycentre@blackpool.gov.uk*
w **showtownblackpool.co.uk**
Blackpool's archive is currently closed for rebuilding work.

University Of Liverpool Special Collections & Archives
a **Sydney Jones Library, Chatham Street, Liverpool L69 7WZ**
t 0151 794 2696
e *scastaff@liverpool.ac.uk*
w **tinyurl.com/uni-liv-arch**
Here you'll find the university's own archive as well as collections from Cunard Line.

GROUPS AND SOCIETIES

Lancashire Family History & Heraldry Society
w **lfhhs.org.uk**
The group runs research centres in Oswaldtwistle and Chorley.

Lancashire Local History Federation
w **lancashirehistory.org**
This body coordinates local-history groups across the county.

Lancashire Parish Register Society
w **lprs.org.uk**
The society was formed in 1898.

Lancaster & District Family History Group
w **lfhg.org**
The group meets in Lancaster.

Liverpool & South West Lancashire Family History Society
w **lswlfhs.org.uk**
The society covers old Lancashire's Hundred of West Derby, and has six local groups.

Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society
w **mlfhs.org.uk**
The society runs a helpdesk at Manchester Central Library.

North Meols Family History Society
w **nmfhssouthport.co.uk**
The group focuses on the area of North Meols in West Lancashire.

Ormskirk And District Family History Society
w **odfhs.website**
The society covers 16 ancient parishes and townships.

St Helens Townships Family History Society
w **sthelenstownshipsfhs.org.uk**
St Helens is located in the south-west of historic Lancashire.

MUSEUMS

Lancashire Infantry Museum
a **Fulwood Barracks, Preston PR2 8AA**
t 01772 260584
e *enquiries@lancashireinfantrymuseum.org.uk*
w **tinyurl.com/lancs-inf-mus**
The museum preserves the history of five local regiments.

Lancashire Museums
w **tinyurl.com/lancs-mus**
The county's museum service manages several institutions.

National Museums Liverpool
w **liverpoolmuseums.org.uk**
Find out more about the Maritime Museum's dock, harbour and shipping records, and the city's International Slavery Museum.

People's History Museum
a **Left Bank, Spinningfields, Manchester M3 3ER**
t 0161 838 9190
e *archive@phm.org.uk*
w **phm.org.uk**
The museum celebrates the history of the labour movement.

WEBSITE

Ancestry
w **bit.ly/anc-lancs**
Visit this page to view Ancestry's collections for the region.

Robberies Register, 1909–1916

Philip Jeffs from Warrington Archives shares a criminal register from the Edwardian age

Interview By Rosemary Collins

Those of us who have discovered an ancestor who had dealings with the criminal justice system will know how fascinating, and sometimes poignant, their stories can be. Warrington Archives holds a 'Robberies Register' from Warrington Borough Police revealing details of more than 2,000 crimes committed in the town between 1909 and 1916. They include the names of the perpetrators and victims, and provide valuable insights into the lives of ordinary people in the early 20th century. Philip Jeffs, archives and heritage officer, tells us more about it.

What Is The Register?

It is important to say right away that despite its name the Robberies Register is actually a record of a wide selection of crimes. Robberies in various forms and other crimes that involve the loss of goods do make up by far the majority of cases recorded, with burglary, shoplifting, pickpocketing and obtaining money by deception all being incredibly common in early 20th-century Warrington.

Licensing and traffic offences are not included in the volume, and those cases perceived as more serious, such as assault or murder, are rare. Cases of attempted suicide are found in the register too, since death by suicide at the time was legally classed as self-murder.

When a member of the public or an officer came in to report a crime, the victim's name, their address, and details of the crime committed against them were written into the register along with the name or description of the suspected perpetrator. At a later date, further information was generally added relating to the outcome of the investigation such as the name of the person apprehended, details of any property recovered, and of course the nature of the punishment.

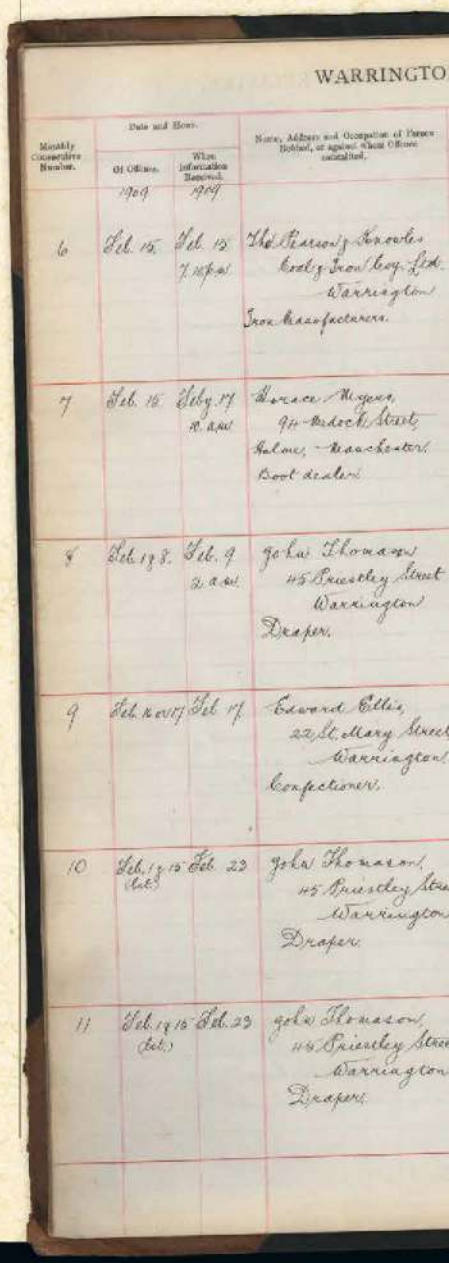
The contents of the volume are now available to search on our website at **wmag.culturewarrington.org/local-history/resources/robberies-database** thanks to the work of volunteers from Warrington U3A's Family History Group. The group selected this particular volume to transcribe because of the wealth of information it contains for family historians, providing thousands of names of both victims and criminals.

This register shows that the 'good old days' were not so good for most of us

What Does It Tell Us About The Time?

One thing this register shows is that the "good old days" were not so good for most of us. In the early 1900s crime was a part of everyday life for many Warringtonians. The crimes in the register vary from the callous deeds of professional, lifelong criminals to acts of poverty and desperation. Some of the crimes have an undeniably funny twist to them, while others are almost unbearably sad. All of the crimes, of course, are just the start of a fascinating story of the events leading up to the crime and the lives it affected. The best way to convey a flavour of the crimes in the register is to describe a few entries to you.

The very first entry in the register is that of Mary



Visit Us

Warrington Archives And Local Studies

a Warrington Museum & Art Gallery, Bold Street, Warrington WA1 1JG
e *searchroom@culturewarrington.org*
w **wmag.culturewarrington.org/local-history**

The archive is open Wednesday to Friday 10am–4pm, and Saturday 10am–2pm. Please contact staff in advance if you require a lot of records, or have limited time for your visit.

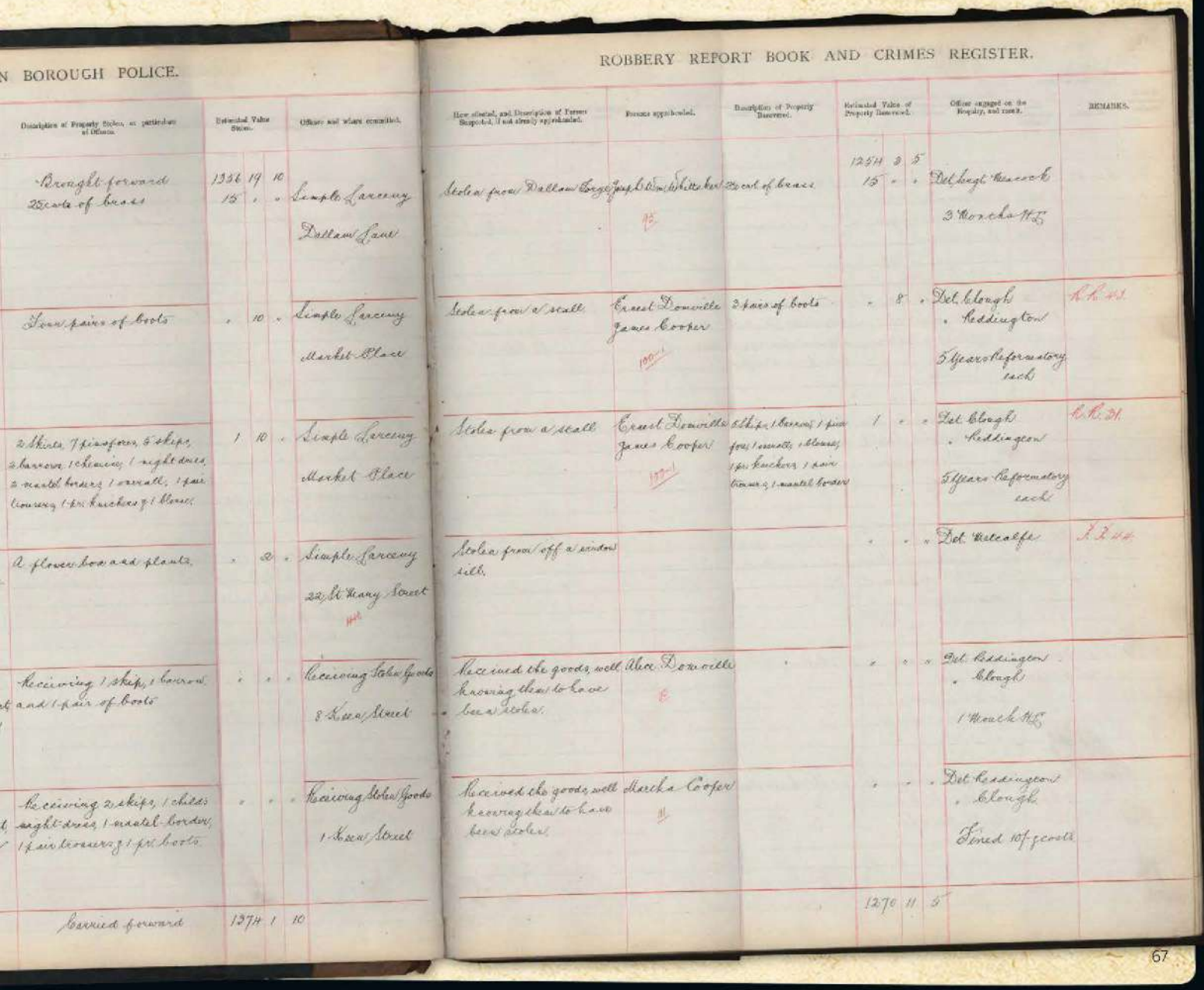
Manfredi of Winwick Street, who came into the police station on 1 January 1909 to report parting with 2s 6d to a conman who had pretended he could get her daughter a place in a mandolin band (the height of pop-music fashion of the day). Mrs Manfredi described the conman as fat and balding, and going by the name of James Creagan. Sadly the register records that he was not apprehended.

Thefts, as mentioned earlier, do make up a large part of the register, varying from the likes of John Shaw and Joseph Massey, who stole over a ton of scrap metal from Monks Hall Iron and Steel Works, to little William Taylor, a boy who stole a paper decoration from Peacocks Penny Bazaar on Christmas Eve, was caught in the act and sentenced to receive six strokes of the birch on Boxing Day. In the case of children committing their first crime, a punishment of birching was usual. For the more persistent child offenders, reformatory school or borstal seems to be the solution, usually as far away from friends or family in Warrington as possible.

One crime recurs again and again, and relates to a cost-of-living crisis and high fuel costs that many today could sympathise with – the theft (or gleaning, depending on your viewpoint) of pieces of coal that had fallen from railway wagons onto the embankments as trains passed by. Coal was needed to heat your house, boil your water and cook your food. For example, on 8 April 1909 we have six women apprehended as a group for taking coal that had fallen from wagons, with a total estimated value of 3s: Mary Preston, Mary Ann Barker, Mary Ellen Barker, Mary Ayres, Catherine Ward and Kate Davies. Two cases were dismissed, three women were fined 10s each, one was fined 20s, and all were given a probation order.

What Other Documents Are In Your Archive?

The Robberies Register is just one of about 200,000 documents, maps and images we hold. All of our collections relate to the history and culture of Warrington and its surrounding villages, and we are adding to them all of the time to represent today's town for future generations. The records we hold can give family historians a window into the daily lives of their ancestors through showing the places they lived, worked, worshipped or went to school, the groups they joined, and the official services with which they may have come into contact. Our catalogue can be searched via **wmag.culturewarrington.org/local-history.**



N BOROUGH POLICE.

Description of Property Stolen, or particulars of Offence.	Estimated Value Stolen.			Offence and where committed.
Brought forward 25 cwts of brass	1356 15	19 "	10 "	Simple Larceny Dallam Lane
Four pairs of boots	"	10	"	Simple Larceny Market Place
2 Skirts, 7 pinafores, 5 skips, 2 barrows, 1 chemise, 1 night dress, 2 mantel borders, 1 overall, 1 pair trousers, 1 pr. knickers & 1 blouse.	1	10	"	Simple Larceny Market Place
A flower box and plants.	"	2	"	Simple Larceny 22, St Mary Street
Receiving 1 skip, 1 barrow, and 1 pair of boots	"	"	"	Receiving Stolen Goods 8 Ksen Street
Receiving 2 skips, 1 childs night dress, 1 mantel-border, 1 pair trousers & 1 pr. boots	"	"	"	Receiving Stolen Goods 1 Ksen Street
Carried forward	1374	1	10	

ROBBERY REPORT BOOK AND CRIMES REGISTER.

How effected, and Description of Persons Suspected, if not already apprehended.	Persons apprehended.	Description of Property Recovered.	Estimated Value of Property Recovered.			Officer engaged on the Enquiry, and result.	REMARKS.
			1254	3	5		
Stolen from Dallam Forge	Joseph Wm Whittaker 95	25 cwt of brass	15	"	"	Det Sergt Peacock 3 Months H.L.	
Stolen from a stall	Ernest Domville James Cooper 100-1	3 pairs of boots	"	8	"	Det. Clough " Reddington 5 Years Reformatory each	R.R. 43
Stolen from a stall	Ernest Domville James Cooper 100-1	6 skips, 1 barrow, 1 pinafore, 1 overall, 1 blouse, 1 pr. knickers, 1 pair trousers, 1 mantel border	1	"	"	Det Clough " Reddington 5 Years Reformatory each	R.R. 31
Stolen from off a window sill.			"	"	"	Det. Metcalfe	R.R. 44
Received the goods, well knowing them to have been stolen.	Alice Domville 12		"	"	"	Det. Reddington " Clough 1 Month H.L.	
Received the goods, well knowing them to have been stolen.	Martha Cooper 111		"	"	"	Det. Reddington " Clough Fined 10/- & costs	
			1270	11	5		

REVIEWS

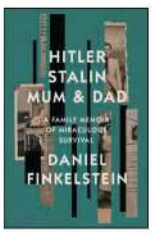
The latest books on history and genealogy, plus apps, podcasts and websites

The book includes a number of photos of the author's parents

Hitler, Stalin, Mum And Dad

A Family Memoir Of Miraculous Survival

Daniel Finkelstein
William Collins, 496 pages, £25



Hitler, Stalin, Mum and Dad is politician Daniel (Lord) Finkelstein's family history memoir, a story of persecution and survival.

Both sides of Finkelstein's family are Jewish and were caught up in the Holocaust and Second World War as this tumultuous period of history unfolded in mainland Europe. His father's experiences were at the hands of Stalin, while his mother's fate lay in the hands of Hitler. The book is eloquently written and provides readers with a moving and personal account, telling us about what happened to his parents and their immediate families. It provides in-depth descriptions of their harrowing experiences as well as the bravery of their eventual survival.

Finkelstein's father Ludwik was born in Lwów, Poland (now Lviv, Ukraine). He was imprisoned and persecuted by communists, and forced to undertake hard labour in Siberia. Finkelstein's German-born mother Mirjam was the youngest of three daughters who eventually escaped after imprisonment and extreme hunger in Bergen-Belsen.

The author's maternal grandfather Alfred Wiener founded the Wiener Holocaust Library initially in Amsterdam, before relocating it to London, where it is one of the world's leading and most extensive archives on the Holocaust, the Nazi era and genocide, hosting the UK's digital copy of the Arolsen Holocaust Archives.

This book tells the story of what happened to two ordinary families caught up in the atrocities of the Second World War, how the family members were persecuted, and how at least some of them managed to somehow survive. The story is moving and inspirational, and serves as a lesson to all of us.

Genealogists and historians alike will appreciate the inclusion of a map, family trees, notes and precious photographs that introduce readers to the author's family.

Jeanette R Rosenberg OBE is a genealogist and family historian who specialises in Jewish genealogy and Holocaust research

DANIEL FINKELSTEIN

DIGITAL PICKS

Rosemary Collins highlights three digital resources that caught our eye this month

E-BOOK

The Genealogist's Internet

archive.org/details/the-genealogists-internet or **spub.co.uk/tgi** (web version)
Free

Author Peter Christian has regained the rights to his 2012 book *The Genealogist's Internet*, and has released it online for free under a Creative Commons licence. The main text has not been updated since 2012 but he has updated the links, and it remains a useful guide to all aspects of starting your tree and the resources online.

PODCAST

Unearth The Past

Podcast services
Free

Historian and genealogist Dr Michala Hulme launched a podcast last May, and series two began in November. As well as research advice, episodes feature a range of guests sharing their family stories and she interviews the likes of DNA Painter's Jonny Perl, house historian Melanie Backe-Hansen and workhouses expert Peter Higginbotham.

WATCH

Cheshire Archives & Local Studies

tinyurl.com/yt-chesh-arch
Free

The videos available on the archive service's YouTube channel include *Flavours From History* (a try-out of recipes in the archives), *Cheshire Crimes and Capers* (including alleged witches and highwaymen), and archivists sharing the secrets behind historical objects.

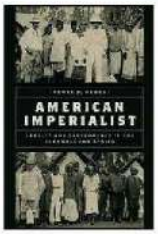
DAVID CROSSLAND

American Imperialist

Cruelty And Consequence In The Scramble For Africa

Arwen P Mohun
University of Chicago Press, 328 pages, £25

FAMILY MEMOIR



Arwen Mohun's great grandfather Richard Dorsey Mohun (1864–1915) was born in the USA. As a young man he began working in low-grade administrative jobs abroad and became a US trade agent in Africa. In time other opportunities beckoned. He began to work for the Belgian king Leopold II's private colony the Congo Free State which exploited ivory, rubber and minerals.

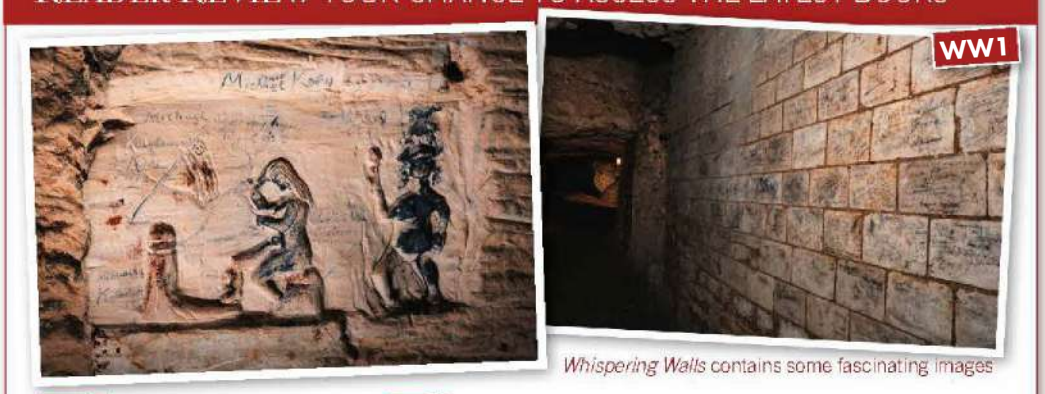
The author has used family papers including Dorsey's letters home, his own writing, newspaper accounts and diplomatic records to tell of his adventures. Dorsey underwent the usual privations of African life: a lack of food and clean water, plus heat, insects and disease.

The dark heart of this story is of how his individual ambition and Leopold's imperial lust worked together to plunge Dorsey into participating in a regime of such atrocities that even other colonial powers were disgusted. He burned villages, displayed amputated hands as a warning to potential miscreants, brutalised men who were pressed into labour, and stood by while innocent people were killed.

As Mohun says, in sage advice for family historians: if you dig into the past, you'd better be prepared for what you find there, because you might not like it.

Jad Adams is a historian and author. His latest book *Decadent Women*, about the contributors to the 1890s art and literary journal *The Yellow Book*, was published by Reaktion in October 2023

Reader Review YOUR CHANCE TO ASSESS THE LATEST BOOKS



Whispering Walls contains some fascinating images

Whispering Walls

First World War Graffiti

David Crossland
Amberley, 96 pages, £15.99

Once you have opened this fascinating book you will find it difficult to put down! This is a well-researched examination of an obscure aspect of the First World War, including over 100 pictures of soldiers and the bunkers and limestone quarries where they lived. British and Commonwealth soldiers decorated the walls of the subterranean caves and tunnels with various kinds of graffiti. These forgotten caves, mainly in north-eastern France and Belgium, housed army units and men were based in them at various times throughout the war – sometimes for a few days or maybe for several months.

The graffiti described in the book include inscriptions and wall carvings that reflected the lives of the soldiers and their experiences on the Western Front. I was particularly interested to see carvings of Native American profiles with headdresses by American soldiers. David Crossland relates many of the soldiers' lives. This book is the result of much valuable research and gives us a vivid and moving account of the lives of those who died and those who survived.

Paul Chennell, London
Paul loves history and has been researching his family tree for the past 30 years

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TV & RADIO

Jonathan Wright previews upcoming programmes on history and family history

Archive On 4: RNLI At 200

BBC Radio 4
Saturday 2 March

Wreckage from the Penlee lifeboat disaster is brought ashore on 21 December 1981

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) is an organisation that it's difficult to imagine anyone inventing today. In great part, that's because of the sheer scope of its work. Despite being a charity supported principally by legacies and donations, it has a central role in keeping people safe in the seas off the British Isles. A measure of the RNLI's success is that, since its foundation on 4 March 1824, it's estimated to have saved more than 142,900 lives.

It's a rich heritage celebrated by comedy legend Griff Rhys Jones, both a keen sailor since childhood and a long-standing supporter, for this new *Archive On 4* documentary. Central to the story is the idea of volunteering and, in particular, the way lifeboat crews selflessly put themselves in harm's way. As you would expect, we hear from some of these crew members as well as survivors who owe their lives to the RNLI, many in interviews recorded for the *RNLI 200 Voices* oral history podcast project (**rnli.org/about-us/our-history/2024/200-voices**).

Family and community stories recur. Four generations of men from the Grant family have volunteered for the RNLI and, between them, been on call for over 120 years. The show also examines the changing role of women in the RNLI and other ways that the service has evolved down the years, for example by bringing lifeguards to British beaches.

As for the individual stories featured, they are powerful and moving, no more so than when we hear the coastguard's recording of the *Solomon Browne*, which sailed from the Penlee Lifeboat Station in Mousehole, Cornwall. It was lost with all hands in the Penlee lifeboat disaster of 1981 after going to the aid of the mini-bulk carrier the MV *Union Star* in the middle of a hurricane.

We also hear stories that, you can't help thinking, should perhaps be more widely known. At Dunkirk in 1940, the famous flotilla of little ships included two lifeboats stationed in Kent – the *Prudential* and the *Lord Southborough* – and crewed by RNLI volunteers. A further 17 RNLI boats, crewed by the Royal Navy, helped to ensure that the men who were evacuated from France could fight another day.

Betrayal At Birth: Georgia's Stolen Children

BBC iPlayer
Streaming now

The country of Georgia, as this powerful documentary puts it, "is coming to terms with a black-market adoption scandal spanning decades". It is believed that tens of thousands of babies were stolen from maternity hospitals, and the parents were told that their children had died. In fact, they had been abducted and sold, a trade that became international after the Soviet Union collapsed. This programme charts an unfolding story and how it has affected the lives of those such as Amy and Ano, identical twins separated at birth. It also has much to say about the role of digital media and DNA testing in helping people to find their biological families.

The Gift

BBC Sounds
Streaming now

On Friday 6 October 2023, the day before waves of Hamas gunmen invaded Israel, a dataset stolen from DNA-testing company 23andMe (**23andme.com/en-gb**) was posted on the dark web. According to the hacker 'Golem', the personal details of customers with Ashkenazi Jewish heritage would be available from the 23andMe database to those willing to pay for the stolen data. It seems very possible that the breach was motivated by racism.

In a bonus episode of the series that considers the consequences of taking a DNA test, regular presenter Jenny Kleeman – who confirmed her Ashkenazi heritage with 23andMe – asks what happened, and if our genetic code can ever be stored safely.

Actor Sally Field with the programme's presenter Henry Louis Gates junior

Finding Your Roots

PBS History
Thursday 29 February and through March

In the jargon of the digital age, PBS History is a FAST (free ad-supported streaming television) channel. In practice, this means UK viewers can access history-themed programming from the US broadcaster via Samsung TV Plus, Plex (**watch.plex.tv/en-GB/live-tv**) and, very soon, LG TVs. Among the highlights is this genealogy series which made the headlines when *Better Call Saul* star Bob Odenkirk learnt he was an 11th cousin of Charles III. There's no UK transmission date for that episode yet, but shows from the first five seasons are in the schedules, and feature the likes of numerous A-list actors and author George RR Martin.

Find It, Fix It, Flog It

Yesterday
March

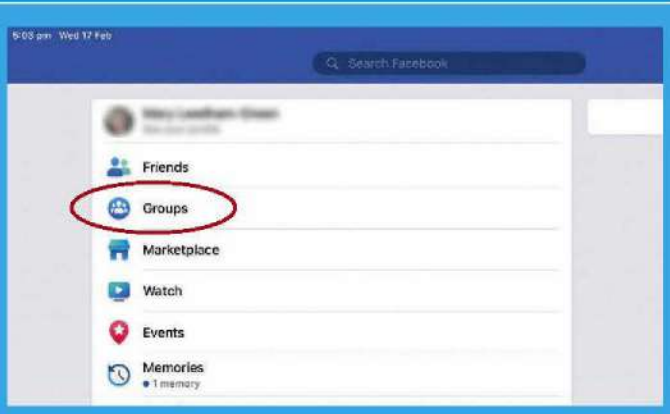
After running for several years on Channel 4, *Find It, Fix It, Flog It* moves to Yesterday. In each episode, Henry Cole and Simon O'Brien search sheds, barns and garages for items that can be fixed up and sold on. Restorer Gemma Longworth and mechanic Allen Millyard help with the hard work, while valuer Ronnie Archer-Morgan aims to ensure that the items' owners turn a profit.

GETTY IMAGES / THIRTEEN PRODUCTIONS

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?®

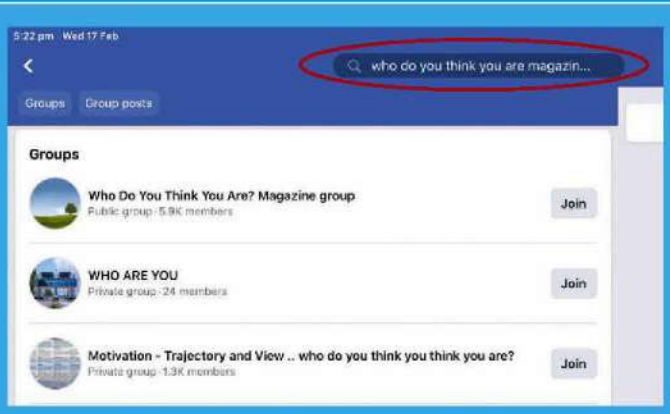
Join Our FACEBOOK GROUP

Did you know that we have a friendly Facebook Group where family historians can share new discoveries, ask for help or just chat about genealogy? If you haven't joined a Facebook Group before, don't worry, it's very simple!



1 Click On The 'Groups' Icon

From the Facebook homepage, click on the 'Groups' icon (this may be at the bottom of the screen on the mobile app or from the menu, or above your News Feed).

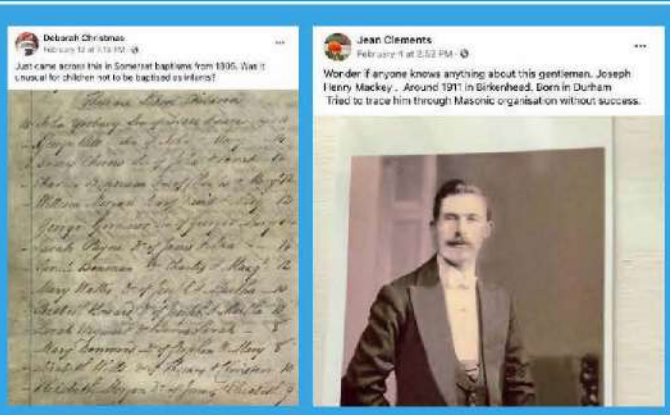


2 Search For Our Group

Search for the *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine* Group (click the magnifying glass), then click 'Join' next to the name. You will need to read and agree to our rules.

3 Wait To Be Added

We are then notified, and will add you as a member as soon as possible. The group is growing rapidly, but you shouldn't have to wait too long before you're approved.



4 Start Posting!

You can either upload your own query or respond to other people's posts. It's a great way to share your love of family history and get help with your brick walls.

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'Dad Survived A Torpedo Attack'

CELEBRATING YOUR DISCOVERIES

Bruce Barnes pays tribute to Arthur Thomas Barnes, who risked his life in the Merchant Navy and met his true love on Canadian shores. By **Gail Dixon**

Bruce's parents Tommy and Vola Barnes

During the Second World War, romance often blossomed between British women and overseas servicemen stationed in the UK. However, the love story of Bruce Barnes' parents worked in the opposite direction.

"My dad Arthur Thomas Barnes, known as Tommy, was born in 1913 in Cottingham, near Hull," Bruce explains. "My mother Vola Fulmer was Canadian and was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1916, although she grew up in Montreal." The combination of wartime and a career at sea would bring the couple together.

"My grandfather Harold Barnes was a seaman, and Tommy followed in his footsteps," Bruce reveals. "He joined the Merchant Navy as a teenager, passed a number of exams and became a master mariner."

During wartime, the brave seafarers of the Merchant Navy shipped convoys of food to Britain from across the world, and transported troops and munitions. At sea, they faced continual danger from torpedo attacks at the hands of U-boats.

In 1939, after the outbreak of war, Tommy was an officer on a ship that regularly docked in Montreal. "Dad would often go to the Montreal Seamen's Club, and on one visit he met Bruce Mitchell who invited him home for dinner with his wife Lilla and her sister Vola."

Tommy and Vola took a liking to each other, and enjoyed a number of dates. In November, they got engaged and a month later Vola set sail for Britain. They married on 19 December 1939, one day after her arrival. However, their 'honeymoon' was short-lived because Tommy had to return to sea four days later.

"Here was Vola, a young woman of 23 living with her recently widowed mother-in-law Ellen whom she had just met, in a foreign country during wartime. Thanks to her letters home, I learned that Tommy's family was very kind to her and that Mum grew to love England."

Tommy was engaged as second mate on the steamer *Empire Ability* owned by Elder Dempster Lines. The vessel transported supplies to Britain on the perilous course from South Africa.

"I was born in 1941, and a few weeks later the *Empire Ability* was torpedoed off the Azores by German U-boat 69. Tommy survived, but two crew members perished. Mum decided to move back to Montreal at this time, to escape the dangers of war."

By 1942, Tommy was sailing between the African Gold Coast and New York. The earlier torpedo attack must have taken its toll, because in 1943 he began acting out of character and absenting himself from ship without permission.

"Tommy was assessed by a shipping federation medical officer in Liverpool and told him that 'his nerves had not been very good recently and that he felt depressed'. The doctor recommended that he see a psychologist, and Tommy was placed in a convalescent home for at least three weeks. I believe that he was showing the first signs of what we know today as post-traumatic stress disorder.

"After the Second World War was over, Tommy sent Mum, myself and my younger sister Margaret back to England to live with Ellen. This was confusing because after he left the convalescent home he returned to Canada to serve on SS *Champlain Park*, delivering coal between Nova Scotia and Montreal."

On 21 December 1945, while the ship was docked in Halifax Harbour, Tommy died after falling between decks into the hold. "Bruce told me years later that Tommy had possibly committed suicide, because he was severely depressed at the time.

"Six months later Mum, Margaret and I returned to Montreal where we grew up. Mum remarried and, on the whole, I enjoyed a happy childhood. Although I have no memory of my father, he is still a hero to me," Bruce says.

The *Empire Ability* was torpedoed off the Azores by German U-boat 69

BRUCE BARNES lives in Guelph, Ontario, Canada, and is a retired human resources manager

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